

MAHATMA GANDHI
THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

MAHATMA GANDHI II

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

BY

REV. DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

Minister of the Community Church, New York City

AND

REV. DR. P. G. BRIDGE

Principal St. Paul's College, Calcutta

AND

MR. F. E. JAMES, 'O B.E., M.L.C.

General Secretary, Y.M.C.A., Calcutta

APPENDED WITH

MAHATMA GANDHI'S JAIL EXPERIENCES

(Both South African and Indian)

AND

ALL ABOUT HIS FAST

PUBLISHED BY C. C. BASAK

THE RESEARCH HOME

127, MUSJID BARI STREET

CALCUTTA

Printer S C MAJUMDAR
SRI GOURANGA PRESS
71/1, Mirzapur Street, Calcutta

To
THE FREEMASONS OF THE WORLD

THIS WORK

AS A MARK OF FRATERNAL SERVICES

IS DEDICATED

BY THEIR HUMBLE BROTHER

THE PUBLISHER

SUBMISSION

It is neither uncerecomonial to serve a well-known repast to the kind-hearted guests without any proposal nor a super-observance to say anything in the way of introduction before to do so

We are not without diffidence to submit before the public a volume devoted to the man who is the "observed of all observers "

The pages which this handy volume opens up before the public, promise to serve a mirror whereon the Man of the Ages glasses And we expect this mirror to lit up the mind of our readers with its reflection

Lastly our grateful thanks are due to those who have been good enough to favour us with their help to make up the pages of this volume

C. C BASAK

PROLOGUE

Absolute truth and nothing but Truth is the basis of all his political ideas. Far from being as was the mistaken idea in some circles Mahatma Gandhi was now more alive than ever before. The idea of Mahatma Gandhi would ever remain in the History of India, nay in the whole History of the world. Some were of opinion that the greatness of Mahatmaji was in his Satyagraha, Non-violence, Non-resistance etc. But they were only secondary principles. The greatest principle of his thoughts was the "Conception of the Individual" and his greatness was there.

Expediency was never the basis of his political ideas. Absolute Truth and fearlessness were the guiding principles of his life. His loyalty to Truth was even greater than his loyalty to the Country. But all the same he was never a creed of supreme activity.

Mahatmaji was against the monopoly of machinery in the production of goods for that was antagonistic to human development, social disintegration being its inevitable result. It is Mahatmaji who is really spinning out the destiny of the whole nation.

P G BRIDGE

Spin the life of nation says He
Comrade of "untouchable" ye ever be
Non-resistance your creed my Brother
For country's sake learn to suffer.

MAHATMA GANDHI

WHO IS GANDHI?

As I enter this morning upon the discussion of Mahatma Gandhi, of India, and of the universal significance of the work which he is doing in his native country, I am irresistably reminded of the day, which was not so long ago, when I first had the pleasure of presenting this man to this congregation, and of declaring my conviction, the same now as it was then, that Gandhi is incomparably the greatest man now living in the world. How the situation has changed in these few months! At that time Gandhi's name was practically unknown outside the borders of India. I hit upon it by the merest chance, and although I came to feel upon the instant that here was a creative spiritual genius of the first order, my information was of the meagrest description. Furthermore, all endeavours to get additional information met with failure. To-day, however, Gandhi's name is appearing on the first pages of all the newspapers. Scores of articles have been published in the magazines and reviews of this country, England and the Continent. A

great journal, the "New York World," sends its leading correspondent to India to "spy out the land," and he returns to write of Gandhi and his policy of Non-Violence and Non-Co-Operation. From almost utter obscurity, this man mounts in a few months to a fame which is as universal as it promises to be immortal. He holds to-day the centre of the world's attention. That position of primacy held so proudly by Woodrow Wilson in 1918 and 1919, and by Nicolas Lenin in 1920 and 1921, is now occupied by a little Oriental who has never held any official position, who seeks neither glory nor power, and who languishes this day behind the bars of an English jail.

THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN INDIA

For such a change as this in the fortunes of a single man, there must be reasons. As it happens, these reasons are not far to seek. I would name this morning four events, as indications of what has been transpiring of late in this far distant portion of the world.

In the first place, there is the amazing growth of the Nationalist party in India. A few years ago, the only persons who wanted "Swaraj" or independence, were a few extremists and fanatics. The

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

great majority of the intellectual leaders cherished no desire or expectation other than that of Home Rule, or Dominion status within the Empire. As for the masses of the common people they were either ignorant of, or totally indifferent to the issues involved. To-day, however, the movement for emancipation has swept like a prairie fire from one end of India to the other. It is true that the native princes and their retainers, many thousands of civic officials and their servants, and certain well-educated and prosperous groups in the community who naturally oppose any change in the *status quo*, are hearty supporters of the English government in India, but these people, taken all together, would not number more than a million individuals. All the rest, from the highest to the lowest, from Rabindranath Tagore on the one side to the meanest of the "untouchables" on the other, are all aflame with the desire for independence. Remember now, if you will, that the population of India is well over 300,000,000, one-fifth of the population of the entire globe, and it is not difficult to understand why this Nationalist Movement is suddenly attracting so much attention. What is going on in India to-day, if only because of the stupendous numbers involved, is the central phenomenon in the world's life.

THE INCARNATION OF A PEOPLE'S SOUL

In the second place, as another reason for Gandhi's rapid rise to fame, there is the fact that he is to-day definitely recognized as the leader of his people in their revolt against the English Crown. A few years ago Gandhi was a friend of England and her rule in India. More than once he had received favours and rewards at the hands of the Imperial Government. During the Great War he supported the Allied Cause, and, in so far as it was possible for a non-resistant so to do, upheld the power and authority of English arms. After the War he advocated no reform more drastic than a reasonable measure of Home Rule. It was the massacre of Amritsar, when General Dyer turned his machine guns on an innocent crowd of Indians, killed between three and four hundred men, women and children and wounded, I know not how many more, that changed the soul of Gandhi. From that time on he became an ardent champion of Freedom. One year ago last December the All-India Congress formally endorsed his programme of Non-Violence and Non-Co-Operation. This last December less than three months ago, the Congress reaffirmed the programme by an overwhelming majority, and named Gandhi as the leader of the movement for Independence. This man holds

absolutely in his hands to-day the destinies of his people When Gandhī speaks, it is India that speaks When Gandhī acts, it is India that acts. When Gandhī is arrested, it is India that is outraged and humiliated More truly, I believe, than any other man who has ever lived, this great Indian is the incarnation of a people's soul.

REPRESSION AS AN ADVERTISEMENT

Thirdly, as an explanation of Gandhī's fame and influence at this moment, there is the repressive policy recently adopted by the English Government Why any government should turn to repression in a crisis like this, is explicable only on the supposition that governments are utterly ignorant of history and human psychology and learn nothing from experience For, repression has never worked I challenge anybody to point me to a single episode in either ancient or modern history, which proves that repression has even once achieved the end to which it has been directed This policy has certainly been no success in English hands It failed in America in 1775, it failed in English domestic affairs in the '20s and the '40s of the last century, it failed in South Africa after the Boer War; it failed in Ireland yesterday; and it will fail in India to-morrow If repression succeeds in any-

thing, it is in advertising the cause of the enemy. "We are advertised by our loving friends," says Shakespeare, to which I would make the addition that we are advertised as well by our fearful enemies! Nothing that the Indians could have done of themselves would have spread such knowledge of, and won such sympathy for, their movement for Independence as the policy of the British Authorities in recent months. When the Ali Brothers were arrested, for example, news of the event spread to the remotest corners of the Moham-medan world, and made every Moslem a champion of freedom for India. When Lajpat Rai was seized and imprisoned, thousands of Englishmen and Americans were immediately aroused, for they knew this man to be a scholar and a gentleman and could not understand the nature of a situation which made necessary his confinement. So also, now, with Gandhi himself! Millions of people the world around know him to-day, and will believe in and love him passionately to-morrow, because they see a saint doomed to martyrdom by the tyranny of Imperialism.

THE PRINCE'S VISIT

Lastly, as an indication of what has been going on in recent months, I would remind you of the

visit of the Prince of Wales to India. For sheer stupidity, I know of nothing to compare with this event. We are told that this trip was planned in order to demonstrate the loyalty of the people of India to the British Crown. As a matter of fact had the Indian been loyal, there would have been no necessity for a Royal visitation. The very exigencies of the situation made inevitable just the opposite result from what was intended or desired. No sooner was the Prince's journey announced than Gandhi organized his boycott not because he had anything against this innocent young man, but because he saw in his coming a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate how the Indian people felt about English rule. As soon as the Prince arrived this boycott was put into effect. Everywhere he went, the natives met him with averted eyes and turned backs. Finally, at Allahabad, they refused to meet him at all. When the Prince of Wales entered this place, it was as though he was arrived at a city of the dead. Streets were deserted, doors were barred, and shutters drawn at the windows, while the people by the thousands swarmed to a rendezvous outside the town to acclaim "Swaraj" and pledge themselves to its support. The visit of the Prince of Wales, now drawing to a close, has been simply one vast demonstration of Indian unrest. More than any-

thing else that has happened, or could have happened, it has taught the world of Gandhi and his great crusade for Liberty

POLITICAL LEADER OR RELIGIOUS PROPHET

Such are some of the events which have conspired in recent months to draw the attention of mankind to India. In so far as these events have enabled men to know who Gandhi is and what he is doing they are beneficent, for I can imagine no truer baptism of the soul than knowledge of this eastern saint. To those who understand what it means in terms of inward purity and outward devotion, his name falls on the heart "like the gentle dew from heaven." From another and more important point of view however these events must be regarded as unfortunate, for they are tending to present Gandhi to the world simply as a leader of a Nationalistic cause. They are teaching men to classify the Indian Mahatma with such historical figures as William Tell, William Wallace, Robert Emmet Kosciusko, George Washington, and Garibaldi, as the champion of the liberties of an enslaved people. This of course, he is! Gandhi stands to-day at the forefront of his nation's life, as we have seen and matches in heroic service of

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

freedom the achievement of any of the great Nationalistic leaders of the past But it is a deplorable mistake to look at Gandhi exclusively or even primarily from this standpoint He is more than the leader of a movement for National Independence his task is nobler even than that of championing the political emancipation of a great people Dear to his heart as is the deliverance of India, immediate as is his concern with this great cause at the present moment, it must still be reckoned as a mere incident in his career, a passing episode in a life devoted to higher and further issues If the movement for Independence had never appeared, Gandhi would still be the same transcendent figure that he is to-day, and if this movement ended to-morrow, in defeat or victory, Gandhi's real work would still be on to its appointed end That there must be something wrong with an idea which classifies this man with Wallace, Washington and Garibaldi—all of whom were soldiers who drew blood on the field of battle, is shown conclusively by the fact that Gandhi is a non-resistant who refuses to take the sword even to fight for Liberty but appeals to a "higher law" than that of violence namely "strength of spirit" What we have here in the case of Gandhi, as always in the case of the non-resistant, is a religious leader, a man not of local, or national, but of

universal significance It is in the realm of the spirit that Gandhi "lives and moves and has his being" That is not primarily with Kings and premiers, but with God and the soul of man, that he does business Above and beyond the political liberation of his own or any other people, he seeks the spiritual redemption of mankind If we would classify him with any of the supreme figures of human history, it must be with such august religious prophets as Confucious and Laotse, Buddha, Zoroaster and Mohammed, and most truly of all, the Nazarene! Out of Asia, at long intervals of time, have arisen these inspired witnesses of God One by one they have appeared to teach men by precept and example the law of life, and herewith to save the race To-day in this our time, there comes another of this sacred line, the Mahatma of India In all reverence and with due regard for historic fact, I match this man with Jesus Christ! If the lives of these two were written side by side, as Plutarch wrote the lives of the great heroes of Greece and Rome, it would be amazing to see to what extent they are identical

GANDHI'S FOLLOWING

Now it is of this universal significance of Gandhi as a spiritual leader, that I want to speak

to you this morning I find this significance most clearly typified at least for the beginning of our discussion, in the personal character of the man. We can best get at this aspect of the problem by asking how it is that Gandhī has managed to acquire such a marvellous influence over the Indian people. Of the nature of this influence there can be no question, it is one of the most extraordinary personal phenomena in the world to-day. As Gandhī moves from place to place, great multitudes of men and women follow him, as similar multitudes followed Jesus in Palestine. When he appears to speak in some town or city, crowds running all the way, from twenty-five thousand to seventy-five, people gather to hear his words. That he is a wonder-worker is implicitly believed by the ignorant and superstitious, and stories of his miracles are now the legend of the countryside. Everywhere he is called Mahatma, the "Saint" or "blessed one," for already the people reverence him as one who is divine. To find anything to match this influence of Gandhī over his people, we would have to return to ancient times and remote places, and even then the parallel would be incomplete. It is the testimony of a competent and unbiassed observer that Gandhī's personal following is greater in numbers, and more devoted and disciplined in spirit, than any man's history has ever known.

NOT AN INTELLECTUAL

If we seek for the explanation of this fact, we cannot find it, I believe, in any of the ordinary aspects of personality. It does not reside, for example, in Gandhi's physical presence, which has been described as "pitifully insignificant." Thus he weighs less than one hundred pounds. He shows all the weakness and emaciation of one who has disciplined his body to an asceticism of an extreme type for over thirty years. On occasions he is so feeble that he is unable to stand, and has to address his audience while seated in a chair. His only impressive physical feature is his eyes, which glow with the flaming passion of a spirit which burns as though it would consume the flesh.

So also, I cannot find that his personal influence has its origin in any extraordinary degree of intellectuality. Gandhi does not impress me as having exceptional mental powers. Certainly he is not to be compared with such an intellectual giant as Leo Tolstoi. To me, at least, it is inconceivable that the Indian could write such books as "War and Peace," "Anna Karenina," or even "My Religion." Great as he is, Gandhi does not seem to move on this plane of achievement at all. I feel the same way, also about his gifts as an orator. I speak with some hesitancy here, for the standards

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

of oratory, as of music, may be very different in the East from what they are in the West. What is genuine eloquence in India may not be recognizable as such at all in the United States. But I might as well confess that Gandhi, so far as I can judge from his printed addresses, does not impress me as an orator. I find in his utterances no such magic of words as we are familiar with in the case of men like Edmund Burke and Patrick Henry. I had difficulty for example, in selecting a passage from Gandhi's writings which had the lift and beauty, the soaring grandeur of style, which made it appropriate for reading as scripture in this service. That Gandhi can work as spell over an audience we know from abundant testimony, but it must be for reasons quite apart from eloquence of speech.

A TRANSCENDENT PERSONALITY

What is it that the Indians see when they look upon this man, and hail as Mahatma? Not a great physical presence, not a gigantic intellect, not an inspired orator, but a personality or character of transcendent spiritual beauty. What they see, first of all, is a man who has made his life to be at one with the great masses of the people. Gandhi was well born of a family with ample means, and given

the best educational advantages both in his own country and in England. When he returned to Bombay, he began his career as practitioner of the law. Then he did what so few men in any age have ever done! Instead of climbing up, up the ladder of achievement to wealth and fame and thus away from the common people, he proceeded deliberately to move down—down to the depths of human misery and woe, down to where men toiled desperately and died miserably, down to the dark places of sweat and tears and blood. From the beginning he was resolved that there should be no suffering among men which he did not endure, no outrage which he did not feel, no Cross which he did not carry. Even the “untouchables” should not be beneath his comradeship, to them he would descend, and with them share the bitterness of the world’s contempt! The experience of men, in other words, down to its remotest horror, he made his own, and always, in his long struggles for reform met first himself the hazards to which he invited others. How beautiful, for example, is the story of his leading the Hindu “coolies” in South Africa out on the land in revolt against the iniquities of Government! Here Gandhi was the first to sleep on the bare ground beneath the stars, the first to practise the vow of poverty which he enjoins upon his followers, and the first to cultivate the land for sustenance!

THE SYMBOL OF THE LOIN-CLOTH

How impressive also the most recent and much more famous story of the loin-cloth! Talk with any enemy of Gandhi, and almost at once he will mention the loin-cloth episode, and offer it as proof of the Mahatma's insane fanaticism. What is this episode? Some months ago, in the prosecution of his Non-co-operation campaign against the Government, Gandhi ordered his followers to boycott all cotton goods imported from England, destroy whatever foreign cloth or clothing they had no hand, and spin what they needed on their own domestic spindles. It soon developed that obedience to this command would cause great inconvenience and even suffering, especially among the poor, by stopping them practically naked of the little that they had. At once Gandhi appeared in public, on the country high ways and even in the cities, clad in nothing but a loin-cloth, that no man in all the land should be embarrassed by a poverty greater than his own. Such deeds are commonplace in Gandhi's life. His whole career reveals positive passion for community of experience with mankind. When his people look upon him, therefore, they see not a leader merely but a comrade and a brother, one who is in all things like unto themselves, and of course they reverence him as one who is divine.

HE IS LOVE INCARNATE

This deliberate kinship with the masses of his fellow-countrymen leads us to another quality which is fundamental in any estimate of Gandhi's personality. I refer to his self-abnegation, his sacrifice, his capacity for suffering. Very early in his career Gandhi discovered what he called "the law of conscious suffering"—the truth that the mastery of the world waits upon the man who is willing not to make others suffer, but to suffer himself, and his whole life has been a discipline to its attainment. At the outset he sacrificed his property, his social standing, his profession, everything that could separate him from entire devotion to his fellow-men. In his personal habits he began and still continues to practise an asceticism that might well be the envy of a mediaeval monk. In his work as a reformer he has evaded no penalty, but has accepted gladly the punishments imposed upon him as only so many weapons to his hand. He has faced an assassin without flinching. Four times in South Africa and in India, he has been imprisoned. Thrice he has been beaten by mobs, and once left prone in the gutter as one dead. His body bears the stripes of the whips with which he has been lashed, his wrists and ankles the marks of the chains with which he has been bound for hours together to the

iron bars of his cell Road Paul's catalogue of sufferings, and you find it a less terrible array than Gandhi's! "I have gone through the most fiery ordeals that have fallen to the lot of man" is his testimony And all because sacrifice has been deliberately chosen as the law of his life and the sword of his fray! It is this which the Indians see when they look upon the sacred and wasted frame of their leader It is this which they remember when they think of him in some far distant part of the country-side Imagine the stupidity of a government which hope to break such a man, or sever him from the worship of his followers, by fresh arrest and imprisonment!

Greater than all that we have yet mentioned in the character of Gandhi, is the love with which his entire being is saturated No man of our time, few men of any time, have risen to such heights of tenderness and compassion for mankind as this Mahatma of India Anger, malice, resentment, hatred, have altogether disappeared from his heart and nothing is now left but the pure essence of love to his fellowmen And his fellowmen include all men who live upon the Earth! Like God himself Gandhi is "no respecter of persons" He holds White men and Black side by side within the embrace of his affection He ends the long feud between Moslem and Hindu, and makes them

brethren, one of another While recognising certain social utilities of the caste system, he wipes out the barriers of separation in his personal relations, and seats Brahmin and "Untouchable" at a common board and leads them in breaking bread together Even the English are not excluded from his goodwill for "love your enemies" is as stern a command for Gandhi as for Jesus "Tell the British people that I love them, and want their association" is the word that he has spoken a thousand times Think of his conduct at the time of the attempt upon his life in South Africa! Asked in the hospital, where he was hovering on the verge of death, to take action against his assassin, he refused Why should I seek to injure or punish him, he said The man did what he thought was right, risked his life for what he thought was right! I believe in that man, I shall love him, and win him to myself And he did! In a few months the assassin was conquered by the might of Gandhi's forgiveness and became straight-away one of his most ardent followers Equally beautiful is Gandhi's attitude towards General Dyer, the officer responsible for the massacre at Amritsar I cannot co-operate with him, says Gandhi, "I can not recognize his authority or obey his orders But if he fell sick of a fever, I would hasten to his bedside and nurse him back to health" There is no bitterness in this man, no last flickering spark of hatred

or revenge He is Love Incarnate In every act and even gesture of these last years, when patient suffering has purified his soul, he has been a perpetual witness to the truth of his own great words "Anger will serve no purpose We must meet ungodliness by godliness We must meet untruth by truth We must meet cunning and craft by openness and simplicity We must meet terrorism and frightfulness by bravery "

MASTER OF THE SECRETS OF SPIRITUAL LIVING

It is qualities such as these, which have become familiar to all Indians, that give Gandhi such a bond upon the imagination and devotion of his people. It is these same qualities also, that give to him and his work a universal significance Gandhi is a man who has mastered the secrets of spiritual living His soul has been lifted, by virtue of incomparable discipline, to the measure of the stature of those realities which are of God In humility, in sacrifice, in ardent love for men, he is one of those perfect characters which come along once in a thousand or perhaps only in two thousand years And to-day he lies in prison Such men are the judges of our world A society which cannot suffer a Jesus,

or a Gandhi to be at large, is a society which is not fit to live, and by this token is already doomed to die

DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE

A second evidence of Gandhi's universal significance is found in his doctrine of non-resistance, which he says, "does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant" I refer more particularly to the fact that Gandhi is the first man who has succeeded in applying the non-resistant idea on a vast scale, and in working out a technique for its successful operation in determining the great issues of social life. Gandhi in other words, has demonstrated the feasibility of non-resistance as a method of political and economic reform, and therewith, definitely as Newton or Darwin opened up a new era in human history.

Hitherto non-resistance has laboured under two very serious disabilities. In the first place, its practice has been limited in the past to the life of the single individual, or here and there to the experience of single and isolated groups of individuals. The great non-resistants have been Jesus, St Francis, William Lloyd Garrison, Henry David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoi—men of transcendent personality and influence,

who have exemplified nobly the possibilities of non-resistance in their own private lives, but have never attempted or been able to apply it on a universal scale to society at large. Occasionally, to be sure, there have appeared larger or smaller groups of men and women who have organised movements, and even whole communities on non-resistant principles. Thus there were the Christians of the first two centuries of our era, various heretical sects of the Middle Ages, such as the Cathari, the Waldenses and the Albigenses and such modern religious groups as the Quakers, the Mennonites and the Doukhobors of Russia and western Canada. But these groups, like separate individuals of the Tolstoyan type, have been independent and self-contained. They have lived very largely in, and for, themselves and thus are important as an example rather than as an influence. They show what non-resistance can do on a small scale, but teach nothing about its practicability as a general social principle.

The second difficulty, under which the non-resistant gospel has suffered in the past, has been its identification with a remote or other-worldly type of life. The non-resistant of the Middle Ages was the monk of the St. Francis type, who abandoned the world and went off to live alone by himself or with his group of disciples. The supreme non-resistant of modern times was Tolstoi, who character-

istically cut himself off from his family, his country, his church and lived like a kind of hermit on the land, and at the end fled away, like a wounded animal in the bush, to die alone. These men were sublime in their personal lives. The non-resistant in all ages has marked the highest attainment of inward purity and outward sacrifice. But with few exceptions—Garrison, for example they have achieved virtue at the expense of contact with the world of men. From the practical point of view the non-resistant has again and again been an ineffective man. He has solved the problems of life by running away from them. Tolstoi is one of the sublimest characters in history, but he contributed nothing to the solution of those questions that vex most terribly the society of modern times.

SOCIAL REVOLT BASED ON LOVE

It is these two disabilities which have left the advocate of non-resistance helpless to commend his doctrine as an adequate method for meeting the contingencies of the modern industrial struggle, for example, or of international war. Non-resistance may be all right, he has been told, as a personal idiosyncrasy or as a means of escape from social responsibility, but it has nothing to offer the man who has to meet things as they are! And now,

THE WORD SIGNIFICANCE

behold comes Gandhi, a new type of non-resistant, a man who leads his people in the greatest movement of revolt our age has known, and does it on the basis of a programme of "resist not evil!" It is this programme or technique of non-resistance as a method of social change, as the plan of campaign in what is literally a war for National Independence, that constitutes Gandhi's unique and immortal contribution to experience. Beginning with the elementary precept of 'non-violence,' which pledges all Indians to abstain from use of force under all circumstances, Gandhi passes on to his second and basic principle of "non-co-operation." This is only superficially a negative principle—a refusal to co-operate in any way with the English Government, to accept favours or rewards, to use the courts, to send children to the schools, to buy English goods, to pay taxes, to recognize the laws. At bottom, it is a magnificently positive assertion of Indian self-sufficiency—the definite organization of a society which is politically and economically self-sustaining and therefore independent. What Gandhi is doing is teaching his people to do their own work to manage their own affairs to build and maintain their own institutions and to endure in patience, not only without hatred or desire for revenge but with actual good-will towards the enemy, whatever suffering this policy may bring upon them from their alien rulers. He

is organizing a vast programme of social revolt on the basis of love love for one another expressed in terms of mutual service and love for the enemy expressed in terms of forgiveness and compassion He is showing that no people need be helpless in the face of physical force, or to resist force with force to their own misery and destruction All they have to do is to act together in ignoring it to rise above it by discipline, to conquer it by suffering "We must meet organization by greater organising ability We must meet discipline by greater discipline and we must meet sacrifices by infinitely greater sacrifices "

ERA OF FORCE COMES TO END

It is in this programme of non-resistance, applied on a vast scale to social issues, that I find evidence of a significance in Gandhi's work which far transcends the borders alike of country and of race If the Mahatma succeeds in his great venture, non-resistance will be made for the first time in history a universal principle of life The reproach that it is nothing more than an eccentric rule of individual or sectarian life, will be removed The charge that its feasibility is limited to the single life, or the unworldly habit of experience, will be answered If Gandhi succeeds, we shall see that non-resistance is

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

a sound method of social action, that resort to violence for any cause is no longer necessary, that for defence against aggression and in endeavours after liberty, there is "the better way" than force. If Gandhi succeeds, do I say? Gandhi has already succeeded, he has demonstrated this truth. His arrest yesterday was the final evidence of his triumph. More terrible to England than any sword, is the steadfast patience of this one little man who, in the true spirit of love, "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." In Gandhi if men be wise, the era of force at last comes to its end, and the era of peace and brotherhood begins!

THE CHARGE OF MAD WRECKING

There is one final aspect of Gandhi's universal significance of which I would speak before I end this morning. I can best convey to you what I mean by referring to the charge most often brought against Gandhi by his enemies, that he is a fanatic who would destroy everything that civilization has achieved in the last three hundred years. Thus it is said that he would close the hospitals in India, rip up the railroads, smash the printing presses and cotton factories, scrap the whole intricate mechanism of modern life, in a vain endeavour to restore at

one stroke the simpler ways of an earlier and more primitive day. Now, that Gandhi is thus a mad wrecker of the machinery of society as we know it to-day, is obviously disproved by the fact that he himself makes constant use of the various devices which are the commonplace of our time. Thus when he was so desperately wounded by the assassin in South Africa, he went to a hospital and was there nursed back to health by an English woman who had come to know the kind of man he was. In India he travels constantly from place to place on the railroads. The other day, when extraordinary speed was necessary, he made the journey in a high powered automobile. His use of the printing press is constant and most effective.

FIGHTING THE FRANKENSTEIN OF WESTERN MATERIALISM

There is truth, however, in the statement that Gandhi is fighting the machine of western civilisation in India, and seeking to restore the native and therefore primitive culture of his people. It is just this which marks, to my mind, the culminating evidence of his genius as a spiritual leader. For Gandhi, as he looks upon his country to-day, sees it subjected to a twofold yoke. On the one hand, there is the yoke of English Government the

bondage of an alien political system against which the Nationalist Movement is now being directed. On the other hand, there is the yoke of capitalism that economic system which uses the vast machinery of modern invention for the exploitation of many to the profit of the few. To Gandhi, release from this economic system of western capitalism is as important for India as release from the political system of British Imperialism. If English Rule is overthrown only to leave behind it English railroads, English factories, English promoting companies, and so on, the Indian people will have gained only the shadow and not the substance of Independence. They will be still enslaved, and enslaved to a system which is fatal to the best interests of humanity. At the heart of this Western civilisation of ours Gandhi believes, is death and not life. We have created a vast machine which proves to be a Frankenstein which is devouring us. This monster has bound us to the wheel of labour, deceived us with the lure of wealth, degraded us to the base uses of materialism and levelled to the ground our standards of moral and spiritual idealism. Even in a physical sense it is a failure, for in the end it brings only such calamity as the Great War. It is this system of economic ruin which Gandhi sees coming into Asia, after having conquered and ravaged our Western world. He sees it victorious in

Japan, he sees it invading China, he sees it planted at the heart of India and he declares war against it! He fights the opium trade, he battles against the liquor traffic, he substitutes the domestic spindle for the factory loom, he denounces the railroad, the automobile and the machine in general. What Gandhi is attempting to do is to save India from the blight of Western materialism by restoring her own native civilisation and culture before it is too late. He is trying to preserve his land from the curse of commercialism, the horror of machine-exploitation and production, the slavery of wage-labour, the whole black system of capitalistic life. And he would do this not for its own sake, but for the sake of India's soul. He would save the spirit of his people, their simplicity, their art, their religion, their mystic comradeship with one another and with God.

SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

It is here, in this great service, that Gandhi becomes in very truth the great religious leader of whom I spoke in the beginning. It is in this work of spiritual redemption that he takes on a universal significance, for the West as well as for the East. For in saving India, Gandhi is saving the world. In staying the ravages of capitalism in his own land, he

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

is starting a movement which, by process of reaction, will flow back into our world and restore to us those things of the spirit which we have lost. Our western civilization is in exactly the situation of Rome in the days of the great Cæsar. It has mastered the world by the power of its arms, and is exploiting its resources and peoples to its own advantage. As its outward glory increases, however, its inward disintegration proceeds. At the critical moment in Roman history, there appeared Jesus and the Christians, who brought to the perishing world a new source of life which preserved its vitality for a period of two thousand years. At the critical moment in our not dissimilar age, there appears Gandhi! Does he not also bring with him a new life of the spirit, and may he not therefore be truly hailed as the saviour of the world?

CHRIST OF OUR AGE

It is thus that I would speak of the universal significance of Mahatma Gandhi and his work in India. The parallel with Jesus constantly presents itself. The Nazarene was a divine personality, he taught the law of love, and laid down a programme of non-resistance for its fulfilment, he sought to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth by dethroning Mammon in favour of God. So also with Gandhi!

This Indian is a saint in his personal life , he teaches the law of love, and non-resistance as its practice , and he seeks the establishment of a new social order which shall be a kingdom of the spirit If I believed in "the second coming," as I do not, I should dare to assert that Gandhī was Jesus come back to earth But if "the second coming" has no historical validity, it has at least poetical significance, and in this sense can we not speak of Gandhī as indeed Christ? In a little book called "The Scourge of Christ," sent me by the author, Paul Richard, from the foot of the Himalaya mountains, where he lives, I find two remarkable sentences

"If Christ come again, would he not choose again to be a son of an enslaved people, rather than a citizen of the empire?"

"The Christ, if he comes, will not be of the white race , the coloured peoples could not put their faith in him "

Is not this the prophecy of Gandhī? Does not this prove him to be the Christ of our age? Today, as in the olden time, it is no longer a question as to whether Christ is here or not It is a question only of who will recognize and follow him !

BY

REV. DR. P. G. BRIDGE

Principal, St Paul's College, Calcutta

MAHATMA GANDHI'S THOUGHT

The time has arrived, I believe, for an attempt to be made to present in a more or less systematic order the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi to classify them and to link them together. The task is by no means an easy one. Mahatma Gandhi has not written unfortunately a systematic treatise on Politics, neither has he evolved a system of his own in realms of speculative Philosophy. His has been a feverishly active life, consecrated to a Holy warfare for righteousness and the amelioration of the conditions of his own countrymen. We have to glean in the prolific field of his productions, in speeches and after-dinner discourse, in addresses and in replies to addresses presented to him by various public bodies and in several public occasion. But though the task is not easy, the clearness and terseness of diction, the logical and consistent argumentation makes the task less arduous. His ideas follow with inevitable sequence from one another. He has one cardinal principle from which one can clearly see the whole thing emanating. There is an idea which is the fountain from which flows all the rivulets of his thought.

Which is the fountain-principle? Which is the

primordial and fundamental idea, the starting-point of all his conclusions? Some people would be inclined to say that this fundamental idea is the principle of Ahimsa, the principle of non-violence, from which it will flow the principle of non-co-operation and deliberate acceptance of suffering, discomfort and any physical privations before yielding to what one considers wrong. Deeper analysis, however, would reveal that there is something more fundamental at the root of his thought. It is well to remind ourselves of the fact that all ethical and political systems start with definite views as to the characteristics of human nature. Psychology is the forerunner of Ethics and consequently also of Politics. The whole structure of Political Science is erected on the foundation of Psychology. All our disquisitions about social conditions are consciously or unconsciously based on a psychological assumptions. Hobbes started his *Leviathan* with a peculiar conceptions of human nature. So did Rousseau. And Mahatma Gandhi is no exception to this. He starts with the emphatic assertion that man is above all a Spirit, a Soul, an Atma. In laying emphasis on the spiritualistic side of man, the Mahatma is following the best Indian tradition in philosophical speculation. The atma is the only true reality. Mahatma Gandhi would not commit himself to a purely illusory existence of the body, he is concerned with practical

question and not with metaphysical quibbles, it is sufficient for his purpose to emphasise strongly this aspect of human existence "If the world believes in the existence of the soul," he said long ago in an address to the Emerson Club, "it must be recognised that soul-force is better than body-force it is the sacred principle of love that moves mountains To us is the responsibility of living out this sacred law we are not concerned with results " And as a logical corollary of this principle he concludes "the main purpose of life is to live rightly, think rightly, act rightly, but the soul must languish when we give all our thought to the body." And there is but little doubt that the souls of many people languish and perish for want of care and attention, we are all concerned theoretically that the main part of ourselves is the soul and yet we live as if the body and not the soul were the most deserving of consideration

This is then the very pivot of the whole system Man is first and foremost a spirit, a soul, an atma Whatever happens, we must never lose sight of that fundamental truth of our nature. From this it will inevitably follow that the means to promote the development and growth of the human character, whether in his individual capacity or in his political or social atmosphere, must be spiritual means, soul-weapons, and never physical force And the first

among this spiritual weapon is an unflinching and fearless pursuit of truth Mahatma Gandhi is not compromising worshipper of success At a public meeting held in Bombay in 1917 under the auspices of the Bengal and Bombay Humanitarian Fund, he proclaimed his Gospel in no uncertain voice "harmlessness," he said, "is the best form of religion and there is no force higher than truth. This love and pursuit of truth binds men to express themselves exactly as they feel In this Ashram we make it a rule that we must say no when we mean no, regardless of the consequences " At the anniversary meeting of the Social Service League held at Madras in 1916, he discusses the necessary qualifications for social service "It seems to me," he said, "that we do require truth in the one hand and fearlessness in the other Unless we carry the torch of truth we shall not see the state in front, and unless we carry the quality of fearlessness we shall not be able to give the message that we might want to give on proper occasion, when the occasion for testing us comes, and such occasions do not occur so often as they might imagine they come but rarely " In the path of Satyagraha, there is always unflinching adherence to truth It is never to be forsaken on any account, not even for the sake of one's own country The final triumph of truth is always assumed for that divine method With truth for

sword, man needs neither steel nor gun-powder. He conquers the enemy by the force of the soul, which is Love. A coward is incapable of exhibiting Love, it is the prerogative of the brave. Even a heart of flint will melt in front of a fire kindled by the power of the soul. Swaraj itself is useless at the sacrifice of truth. The brute-forceman like the oilman's ox moves in a circle. It is a motion, but it is not progress. Whereas the votary of truth-force ever moves forward. The presidential address delivered at Godhra in 1917 with the occasion of the Guzerat Political Conference, and from which these thoughts have been taken, is one of the most lucid and forcible speeches of the Mahatma. The emphasis laid on the value of truth at all costs, without a view to success, will remain as the greatest testimony of Mahatma's moral candour and devotion to ideal. One is compelled to contrast him with notable men of the past who succumbed to the cult of success. Have there not been thinkers who have callously advocated the sacrifice of everything including truth for the sake of the welfare of the country. Machiaveli was not ashamed to admit that he was prepared to lose his soul for the good of his country. As if the soul of any individual could be saved at the sacrifice of truth and of the eternal ideal of justice and righteousness. Mahatma's conception of Swaraj is higher and nobler. The truth will make

you free Political artfulness and diplomatic cunningness will never save the soul of a nation.

The source, then, of all lasting and noble success has to be sought in the region of the soul, and in the devotion to ideals of truth and justice and righteousness. This will prepare our mind for the right understanding of the doctrine of Non-co-operation. The Non-resistance doctrine is not a negative creed, neither it is to be considered as a creed for the weak and indolent, for the physically enervated and effeminate. On the contrary it demands the putting forth of unbounded spiritual activity. "On the physical plane," says Mahatma Gandhi "the Non-resistance attitude may be wholly passive, on the moral and spiritual plane it is entirely active. For, in the first place, he must wage a victorious conflict against his own feeling of resentment, which, if allowed to have its own way, will express itself in retaliation and hatred and then having achieved self-conquest, he must advance to the moral and spiritual conquest of his opponents. Non-co-operation is self sacrifice. I wish to conquer you by my sufferings." This apparently negative doctrine of Non-resistance has been styled by some writers Spiritual Activism. And rightly so. It implies the setting in motion all the hidden force of the soul, specially under the name of love, to bring a change of heart, to produce repentance

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

in the soul of the enemy That mere physical force will never by themselves produce moral and spiritual results seem obvious enough And history testifies to it A war sows the seeds of another war Revenge and counter-revenge seems to alternate, and if one of the contending parties succumbs and yields is only to gather strength and to increase the power of resistance Blows call to blows If we could change our angle of vision and endeavour to realise that when a man or a nation use physical force for the upholding of their rights, he or the nation are still blind to the value of spiritual and moral ideals, the world undergo a salutary change

Hopeless and fruitless idealism, some people are sure to shout This world is not ruled by dreamers and visionaries, they will add I don't think that anybody wishes to establish the rule of the empty dreamer, but we must not forget the saying of a wise man of old when there is no vision, the people perish And that many people and several empires have perished for lack of vision, no one with any knowledge of history will dare to question The fact is that as dean Inge has rightly observed this world is more dominated and ruled by ideals than some people think For our part, we consider fortunate the nation which has got idealists who in season and out of season present ideals before the

minds of the people. When the class of ill-used, misunderstood, persecuted and scorned ceers disappears the day of judgment is at hand. "Quo Deus Vult Perdere, Prius dementat."

It is in consonance with all his principles that Mahatma Gandhi urges us to spiritualise all our activities our social and political life not excluded. "He will render," he said in the Presidential address of the All-India Social Service Conference, "the greatest social service who will reinstate us in our ancient spirituality. The glitter of public opinion and of public approval spoils a good deal of our social service." Mahatma urges that social service to be effective has to be rendered without noise. It is best performed when the left hand knoweth not what the right is doing. Sir Gibbie's work told because no body knew it. He could not be spoiled by praise or held back by blame. Would that our service were of this nature.

The attitude of Mahatma Gandhi to material prosperity follows from his fundamental position. The soul must languish when we give all our thoughts to the body. Much of Mahatma's thought on renunciation is coloured by what we might call Eastern asceticism. A dualistic attitude of mind classifying the universe in things good and in things evil, objects to be pursued and objects to be shunned, the soul belonging to the first class of object and the

body relegated to the last, seems to be at the root of all his thought. Romain Rolland has well summed up Mahatma Gandhi's position. This is the kernel of his thought and this is serious enough. It lays down the negation of Progress and also of European Science. This medieval faith runs the risk of coming into clash with the volcanic movement of the human spirit and of being shattered to pieces. But it would perhaps be prudent to say not "of the human spirit" but of "one human spirit" for, if one can conceive

as I do of symphonic unity of the universal spirit, it is made up of many voices each of which follows its own path. "Civilization," says Gandhi, "is only in name. It is, according to a Hindu expression, the dark age." It makes material greatness the sole aim of life. It makes the European dote upon the acquisition of wealth, enslaves him to it, and deprives him of all peace and interior life. It is a hell for the weak and for the labouring classes and it undermines the vitality of races. It is not at all easy to follow Mahatma Gandhi in his wholesale condemnation of modern civilization and mass production. No one will seriously doubt that modern conditions involve serious suffering to many people, that modern industrial systems encourage greed and ambition and exploiting, but are we going to condemn systems for the private abuses of individuals? Mahatma Gandhi condemns vehemently three classes of men: the

lawyers, the doctors and the teachers One will be prepared to admit that there are individuals in these professions who may do or are doing a good deal of harm to the community but from that it is scarcely logical to argue that the professions themselves are immoral And yet one has to acknowledge that the element of lasting value in the criticism of all three professions is that they introduce a large ingredient of artificiality in our social lives And in the desire and in the appeal to revert to more primitive and consequently more natural condition of things, Mahatma Gandhi but follows the tradition of the great reformers

"Back to nature" is a cry that has often been repeated along the epochs of history by the reformers of society and of religion India was getting on happily without the encumbrances of modern machinery and inventions, her people live gracefully together "The old spinning wheel and the ancient indigenous education ensured its freedom and its good We have to go back to this ancient simplicity" Such plea is not always easy to pursue The ideal of human life has no doubt to be based on the experience of the past but a servile imitation of the past will never be sufficient A vision of the possibilities and potentialities of human growth and development is equally necessary We must never be satisfied with a look to the past, we

must equally endeavour to break through the gloom of the future and to visualise what we are capable of and are destined to

Yet when all is said one must admit that the Mahatma is right in viewing with suspicion the race after material prosperity which is a salient feature of modern conditions "Increase of material comforts," says in his *Confessio Fidei*, it may be generally laid down, "does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth" No teacher of morality will question the inherent difficulty that material comfort brings in its trail to live moral lives "Rome suffered a moral fall when it attained high material affluence So did Egypt and so perhaps most countries of which we have any historical record The descendants and kinsmen to the royal and divine Krishna too fell when they were rolling in riches" And the stern teaching of Jesus Christ on the subject of riches is well known to be repeated And then Mahatma Gandhi ends his appeal to his countrymen with these well worth repeating words "Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than Love of self If we will but clean our houses, our palaces and temples of the attribute of wealth and show in them the attribute of morality, we can offer battle to any combination of hostile

forces without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia Let us seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and the irrevocable promise is that every thing will be added to us These are real economics May you and I treasure then and enforce in our daily life "

One can hear the whisperings of the crowd saying this is a hard saying, the teaching is too high for the common people Humanity has often been taught this lesson and it was sad and grieved in consequence and went away in pursuit of wealth and possessions. The Mahatma realises that "We should still have as we have always had in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideal " He can not fail to realise that as long as human nature remains what it is, material advancement will allure and captivate the senses and obstruct in consequence the vision of the ideal

Perhaps a word ought to be said in relation to Mahatma Gandhi's responsibility for atrocities perpetrated in his name All reformers since the beginning of history have been accused of letting loose forces of revolution which they could not ultimately control Was not Socrates accused of perverting the Athenian youth? And the Jews thought that Jesus was a seducer of the multitude Luther was held responsible for the Peasant's war

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

and for the bloodshed that followed in the promulgation of the Reformation principle And Mahatma Gandhi has been held responsible for the Moplah riots and massacre committed in the Malabar Coast and for other outrages in other parts of India They all are too notorious to require mentioning The doctrine of Non-co-operation and disobedience to constituted law and order was bound, it is alleged, to produce the disastrous results that we have witnessed, human nature being what it is It is foolishness to preach to an infuriated mob the law of love Mahatma Gandhi, in connection with the trouble in the Indigo plantation at Behar, said in the court of District Magistrate of Motihan "I have disregarded the order served upon me, not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being the voice of conscience" Before the eyes of the judge who has to pronounce judgment according to existing law and custom, Mahatma Gandhi is guilty and responsible He himself pleaded guilty, like other Socrates, before the judge Mr Broomfield in his judgment said, "Mr Gandhi! you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge" And the same judge acknowledges a kind of dualism in his personality The man of high ideals and of saintly life on the one hand, and, on the other, the citizen subject to ordinary civil law of the country "I

have to deal with you in one character only It is not my duty, and I do not presume, to judge you in any other character It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be a grave offence against such law " Mr Broomfield was right and was justified to pass condemnatory judgment on Mahatma Gandhi From his point of view, he was the minister of constituted authority and in such capacity he had to act as the vindicator of law and order But he himself assumed the existence of another character in the Mahatma, the ideal type Is there not also a law above all law, the law of conscience? We are treading, we are aware, on dangerous ground The conflict between the individual and the social group owes its origin to antagonism between these two laws The day we solve this problem and are able to harmonise these two laws we shall put an end to all social strife and all revolutionary activities

What is the future of Gandhism in India? We admit it is pretention on our part to put a question of this kind but we had put it because we feel it is all important We shall not attempt a dogmatic answer but we may be allowed to put forward one or two thoughts subject always of course to correction and the guidance of better counsels First of

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

all, we wish it to be clearly understood that we are not concerned here with practical politics, with Mahatma Gandhi's attitude to this or that political question. Our endeavour in this lecture has been to penetrate the thought and ideals of the Mahatma and to examine them in the cold region of abstractions. We do not consider ourselves competent to deal with the practical aspect of the question. But what do we understand by Gandhism? Definitions are often misleading and yet we must try to express in a simple formula the very essence of Gandhism. If we are not greatly mistaken, Gandhism is the spiritualization of all human activities. The social and political not less than religious activities need to be raised to that high sphere of life which is thoroughly permeated by love. In this Mahatma Gandhi is following the best Indian tradition. Is this spirit likely to catch? We are afraid it will not spread with great rapidity among a large classes of people. And limiting myself for the present to the average student, you will permit me to ask you how does this ideal appeal to you? Is it not a fact that your nature, the restless nature of youth, feels impatient and distrustful of ideals and abstraction? What does history teach? What nations are reputed as great? The cult of material success is in vogue who attaches value to ideals and who believes that success will be achieved through the spiritualization

of our activities. Does not the modern Indian mind begin to think in terms of rupees and annas? The outlook is not at all encouraging to this spread of Gandhism. Has not the Gospel of force greater number of followers than that of peace? The young man who approached Jesus and enquired of him as to the needful thing to obtain salvation is one of many millions of youths who had shrunk from and will shrink from a life that demands great sacrifices. The world is too strong for most of us

The highest in Gandhism is, one would like to urge, wonderfully represented in the painting by Abanindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, the Spinner of Nations' Destiny. The Mahatma, like another Plato lifts us his eyes to the Heavens and fixes his vision in the type of the perfect commonwealth. His inspiration comes from communing with that perfect type of social life. There he sees the social bonds in their perfect form, there he contemplates social relationship in their noblest aspect. All the great men have derived their greatness from similar communion with the Highest. And in that contemplation he is spinning the destinies of India. For inspite of all the allurements of the senses, the ideal will always exercise magic attraction on great many of our race. And so long as a nation has soul who commune with the Divine that nature will

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

not and can not perish It is vision that brings life and vitality to the nations

We have done our task It was with great diffidence that I undertook to lecture on this subject But I know how kind and forbearing you are and I was sure that you would overlook my deficiencies The personality of Mahatma Gandhi is very complex I have only endeavoured to study one aspect of it I have carefully avoided commenting upon his practical politics and his attitude to particular problems I have not the necessary qualifications for that study But I think that the time has arrived to analyse his political ideas in the abstract, away from turmoil and controversies of practical politics And the reason for such analysis is not far to seek It is those general ideas and abstract principles that will last The conclusion we come to is that Mahatma Gandhi has made a most valuable contribution to the world's ethico-political thought His ideas may not be completely original, but, after all, as Goethe has said every thing has been thought and the value of a particular thinker consists in re-thinking them and, we may add, in living them And Mahatma Gandhi has done these two things to perfection He has thought out and emphasised again the spiritual element of human life and has also lived in accordance with his principles Mahatma Gandhi has never been intoxicated by

success This is his main claim to greatness. He has never lost sight of the doctrine he has preached in season and out of season Government of self is the necessary conditions to all Government over other people Swaraj begins at Home, in the heart and soul of the individual

BY

MR. F. E. JAMFS, O.B.E., M.L.C.

General Secretary, Y. M. C. A. Calcutta

MAN OF THE AGES

It is difficult in the life-time of a man, to form a correct estimate of his place in the world, or of his philosophy in the development of human thought. More philosopher than politician, more saint than strategist, the smoke of the battlefield of contending forces is still around his frail figure and until it clears away, we shall not see him clearly. This much is certain. He is one of the most remarkable men of the New Age. Whatever may be said of his politics, he stands before all as one who has dedicated his whole life to the advancement of his religion, the religion of love and soul-force. By this he expects to free his people from the bondage of ignorance, servility and economic depression. He is the incarnation of his own gospel. Love radiates from him. Spiritual force converts his weak and tiny body into a dynamo which energises millions of his fellow country men. Otherwise, how could so frail a man command such overwhelming adoration from high and low throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan.

The secret of his power is his own self-abnegation, and the closeness of his communion with God. Observers tell us that during the latter days of his

recent fast in Delhi, his face positively shone with peace and happiness. Gone was the strained and harassed look, joy remained. Those who imagined a man broken and overborne by the burden he was trying to bear, were greatly mistaken. He was sharing the experience of one "who layeth down his life for others", and "greater love hath no man", nor greater happiness.

This is his secret, and this will be his claim to a unique place in history. Teaching that man is a spirit, he lives almost as a spirit himself. He has reduced the art of living to about the most simple terms possible to a human being. He lives almost literally, in the spirit, transcending the ordinary limitations of ordinary men. It is because of this that his fundamental message is universal and eternal. "Man shall not live by bread alone" has been preached before, and will be preached again. But it is doubtful whether there is anywhere in our day, any more potent argument for that Gospel than the life and message of the Mahatma. This may be India's great contribution to the world in our day and generation, for this is certain, that Mahatma Gandhi is not India's alone, "but belongs to the ages."

HIS WAYS AND VIEWS

MOST DESPISED AND BEST LOVED MAN

It was five o'clock in the morning White-clad, white-capped figures ran here and there, pushing, elbowing one another, peering in at the lighted train windows, clambering up the steps of the various carriages They were all eagerly searching for that latest-heralded apostle so altogether upsetting to British peace of mind in India, the reincarnated Holy One worshipped by countless numbers of simple souls with superstitious reverence, a thin, unprepossessing little man, who would have walked through life unnoticed from beginning to end, had he not been endowed with an incandescent spiritual energy, with a burning sense of what he looks upon as India's economic and political wrongs, probably the man most despised and best loved in India Mahatma Gandhi

A SAINT AND MISCHIEF-MAKER

When I climbed down at the Punjab City of Ferozepore, an hour before dawn on the morning of November 9, I had not yet seen Mr Gandhi I

had heard of him in Indo-China and in Siam. In Singapore I had read accounts of meetings in Bombay and Calcutta where he presided over the burning of huge piles of foreign-made cloths. In Java I had listened to an experienced colonial administrator, just returned from India, denouncing him as "a dangerous mischief-maker and breeder of rebellion," who ought to be locked up without a moment's delay. According to the generally accepted view of governing peoples in the Far East, this mysterious personality was an incalculable influence for evil. Yet in India, as far as I could judge, he was worshipped as a saint. Why? That was what I purposed to find out.

AT FEROZEPORE

After several weeks of vain effort to settle upon a time and place of meeting convenient to us both, it had finally been arranged that I should see and talk with Gandhi in Delhi. When I arrived in that city, however, I found that he had changed his plans and was leaving that same night for Lahore, stopping off in the early morning to address a mass meeting in Ferozepore. I bought my ticket to Lahore by the same train. Since Mr. Gandhi had just announced during the session of the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi that he expected

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

to inaugurate "civil disobedience", that is a programme of non-payment of taxes as a means to compel surrender on the part of the 'satanic Government', it seemed to me that very possibly the police might also be seeking an interview with him. It was partly for that reason and partly for the sake of seeing him first as he appeared at one of his great Indian mass meetings that I also decided to stop off at Ferozepore.

CROWDS OF VISITORS

As I left the station, three gigantic silhouettes of mysteriously burdened camels loomed up on the road ahead. With faint clinking of camel bells, they ambled past on their great padding feet, losing little clouds of dust behind them. Though it was still quite dark the whole city was astir. Hundreds of people were walking along all in one direction. The crowd at the station had consisted of men and boys dressed in the ugly white Gandhi skullcaps and Khaddar, a coarse cotton variety of Swadeshi cloth, the hand-spun, hand-woven product that is Gandhi's debatable panacea for all India's economic ills. But here were men, women, children and babies, garbed in all the heterogeneous, infinitely picturesque costumes of the countless tribes and races and creeds whose home is in

northern India, Marwari women in gipsy-like skirts of every colour of the rainbow, men with huge, baggy trousers and turbans piled mountainously on their long curly black hair, men with nothing but a crumpled dhoti caught up between thin legs and tucked in at the belt behind, purdah women, those sheeted ghosts of India, who go out only when they are swathed from head to foot in an opaque white garment with two tiny drawn-work lattices serving as windows for the 'kolit blackened eyes graceful women in fluttering sans, embroidered or painted, silk or cotton, purple, yellow, rose and green, lastly children in silver anklets and bracelets with little amulets tied on strings around their bulging middles if adorned by any costume other than this, most frequently wearing gay little Muhammadan caps of dark coloured velvets encrusted with gold embroidery. Most of this multitude walked bare-foot after the Indian fashion, but for those who had the means there were two wheeled tongas like mine, there were carts drawn by waterbuffaloes or mildeyed oxen with painted horns, there were moth-eaten donkeys as single mounts and occasionally there was a motor car laden with Ferozepore aristocrats and shooting past with utter recklessness

AMONG THE COURTEOUS COUNTRY
WOMEN

We crossed a bridge over the rail road tracks and continued down a straight road, at times hemmed in by the blank, mud-walled Indian houses at times open to the ploughed fields whence must have come all those cartloads of cauliflowers and carrots processioning by. Presently we came to a place where several thousand people were squatting on the ground in a natural amphitheatre surrounded by trees, with a flower decorated platform at the lower end. Our tonga driver deposited us somewhat unceremoniously at one side of the road, and leaving his horse to eat leaves up and down the hedge in unexpected holiday pushed his way eagerly into the crowd. This was the moment when, according to my pessimistic adviser at the station I might have expected some violent anti-foreign demonstration to take place. Nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary an usher with a green, yellow and red Khilafat band across his chest came up and informed me that undoubtedly I would find a place in the purdha section reserved for ladies and there another usher went out of his way to see that room was made for me as close to the platform as possible. The women with whom I was surrounded were all extremely friendly

They bombarded me with questions Punjab which I could neither understand nor answer and went on chattering just the same. Now and then they could not resist the temptation to reach over and surreptitiously feel my dress or finger some bit of jewelery. They held up their poor little half-smothered babies for me to admire, and when the press of people searching for room threatened inundation they linked their arms back of me by way of protection. I shall not forget the courtesy of those uneducated country women.

ARRIVAL OF THE MAHATMA

The sun was up sufficiently high to make us thoroughly uncomfortable before Gandhi finally arrived in a carriage drawn by two horses covered with necklaces and chains of flowers. As the grass in a field is sometimes bent all one way by the wind, so the people swayed forward. A few more or less self-appointed directors jumped up waving their arms frantically shouting to the masses to keep their seats. The air shattered by the familiar cry of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki-jai" "Victory to Gandhi, Great of Soul"! Then those of us in the purdah section saw how on the opposite side a passage was being cleaved through the crowd and one was slowly making his way toward the

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

platform amid showers of far-flung petals and strung marigolds.

MOB-PSYCHOLOGY

There emerged a small, almost emaciated figure, with barehead and feet wrapped in a non-descript shawl such as Linclon used to wear. He sat down cross-legged, indifferent to the shouting, acknowledging by neither word nor gesture the acclamation with which he was received. It struck me that this was not a man to be tempted cheaply. He probably weighed mob enthusiasm for what it was worth compounded of mere love of shouting of violent waving of arms, of curiosity, of tribute-paying instincts expressing themselves primarily in homage to the man rather than his ideas. For himself, he was oddly scornful of all this, or perhaps only rather tired. Never-the-less Mr Gandhi is not, as he so often described, an impractical idealist. He knows only too well the strength of mass support to his cause. He knows that, particularly here in India, the ignorant masses can be made to reflect in multiple images the well-thought-out ideas of the leaders. For the sake of the goal he has set himself, realising his singular power to weld the masses to at least a semblance of unity of feeling, he suffers himself to be adorned. I am not one of

those who believe that he really likes it. As he sat there in the attitude of an ascetic deep in contemplation, he remained curiously aloof from the crowd, nor did he ever descend to it. The craning of necks ceased a little as the people fulfilled their ambition to see that hero in his humble glory. Somebody passed up to him a small spinning wheel. A child near me began to wail, refusing to be comforted by the sticky sweet his mother coaxed him to accept. He continued his dismal howling. While this little domestic incident distracted my attention for a moment, Gandhi had risen and was preparing to address the crowd.

ON THE WAY TO LAHORE

Unfortunately, the time has come for me to leave, if I was to get my luggage from the Cantonment station waiting room and catch the 9 O'clock train for Lahore. I had my first long-range view of Mr Gandhi, but later in the day I was to see him at closer quarters under extraordinary conditions. We continued the journey to Lahore by the same train, Gandhi making his connections at the City station, where he had got off. In answer to a note delivered to him by Abdul, one of his three sons presently came back to my compartment to say that if I would come to the house of Mr Lajpat

Rai at 6 O'clock that evening, he would be glad to see me. Meanwhile we made triumphal progress that surely the Prince of Wales might envy. Vast crowds had assembled at every station. A cordon of Volunteers had to protect the door of Mr Gandhi's compartment from being broken down. If, as might have been expected, the shouting proceeded from the students and the element that Gandhi himself brands as hooligan, many country people were there in a spirit of profound reverence. He clasped the palms of their hands together with fingers pointing upwards in the Indian gesture that is both worship and greeting, and if they could not be sure that they were greeting Mahatma Gandhi himself, they were content just to pay their respects to the train that was carrying him.

MASS MEETING IN A MOSQUE

In my concern to arrive in good time for my appointment, I found myself drawing up in front of the house of Mr Rai half-an-hour too early. It seemed best to wait where I was, and I had just instructed the chauffeur accordingly when a cart came swinging out of the gate with Gandhi and half-a-dozen people crowded into the seats and on the running board. When he saw me,

he stopped his car and explained that he was then on his way to a mass meeting in the Badshahi Mosque "If you would care to come", he said, "we could return to this house afterwards Then I will answer any questions you wish to ask me "

He made room for me to sit beside him, and off we drove to the mosque through streets lined with the cheering populace of Lahore, including many school-children in Gandhi caps, singing a National song Fifteen thousand people must have been packed into the mosque There was not anywhere a square foot of unoccupied floor space, and those who could not get inside had scrambled all over the outside of the building, so that every cornice and projection and even the roofs were swarming with motley Gandhi throngs We entered by a side-door, and almost before I realised what was happening? I found myself obeying Mr. Gandhi's request to precede him along the narrow temporary bridge erected from the back of the mosque to a small square platform in the centre As we hurried along this structure, I was pelted with a generous share of the flowers intended for Gandhi, and my feet narrowly escaped the eager hands reaching up on very side to touch in superstitious reverence the bare feet behind me

An Imam opened the meeting followed by one of Gandhi's co-workers, who made a full report on

the results of the "National Schools" founded in opposition to State schools a year ago. At the close of his address several graduates of the "National University" of Lahore received their diplomas from Mr Gandhi's own hand.

MAHATMA'S SPEECH

As he rose for the first time, dropping off his blanket shawl and appearing clad only in a very short dhoti, in accordance with a recent resolve he had made to share the utmost poverty of his people, I saw, to my surprise, an expression of sophisticated amusement run across the faces of those nearest the platform. But, if for one moment a few people laughed, the laughter ceased abruptly. Mr Gandhi began to speak in a voice that at first sounded a note of great physical exhaustion but after a few moments shook off this weariness and rang out with arresting urgency. He is not an orator. His thin right hand with fingers bent flexibly back-wards at the tips made the same automatic gesture again and again. He did not plead with his audience. He made no attempt to flatter it. Rather did he seem to be speaking in anger and bitterness of heart. He was asking the people how they expected to have Swaraj when they would not work for it, when they would not adopt the vow of Swadeshi and

thus make India self-sustaining as she was of old when, through incapacity to deny themselves comforts or to suffer, they showed themselves unprepared for true-self-rule. Some of the familiar catch words I caught. A stout Moslem gentleman who sat near me on the floor of the platform occasionally acted as interpreter.

TROUBLED FOREHEAD

But the text of Gandhi's face was what chiefly interested me.

His smile was not of the troubled soul. It broke around the mouth and passed quickly, like a veil thrown for a fraction of a second across the settled melancholy of the face. Many Indian faces wear that same melancholy. Sometimes it is sunk in apathy, often it expresses itself in conscious discontent, but whatever its varying shades, it has seemed to me fundamental to Indian thought. It is a flag of the mind. You never see it reflected on a Malayan face, for instance. As for the eyes of this man, they suggest a stern and critical appraisal of everything coming within range of their vision, and a curious detachment. It is so that one looks out on a glittering tropical sea or towards the desert horizon.

A WEEPING AUDIENCE

The windows in the mosque darkened, and the lights hanging from the ceiling gleamed with hostile brilliancy. Many men in the audience were weeping. The slight, half-naked figure of Gandhi, saying again for the thousandth or the ten-thousandth time all that he had to say about the 'Charka' and Swadeshi and Swaraj, seemed to shrink even smaller. Was it that something of himself was actually spent, something material and physical, as his indomitable will battled against the mass-mind striving to lift it to the plane of his own strange vision?

I talked about him with a great many English people in all parts of India, I never heard any except two general expressions of opinion concerning him. To the large number, he is nothing more or less than an arch-hypocrite, a man who talks non-violence and indirectly incites to violence, who professes to love mankind and all the time stirs up the bitterest feelings of race hatred. To the rest he is an incomprehensible religious fanatic whose psychology and point of view are so apart from the usual understanding that it is impossible to meet him on any sort of common ground, in short, a fool. Both sections of opinion agree, that he has let loose forces beyond his control, and that it would have been better if he had been shot a long

time ago Very few of those with whom, I talked had either seen or heard him They said they did not want to do either For three years he has been publishing a weekly paper in English called "Young India," containing signed articles by himself on nearly every development of the political, social and economic situation in India Almost no one in the English community is sufficiently interested to follow that expression of his opinion I expect the censors naturally

THE INDIAN VIEW

Over against this almost universal Anglo-Indian attitude there are a great many Indian attitudes, the why and wherefore of which I shall relate in another place But I can remember only three Indians who accused him of out-and-out insincerity Sir Surendranath Banerjea, who has rendered distinguished services to the liberal party in India and who is now occupying an important post in the Government of Bengal, made no effort to disguise his feeling that of late Gandhi had turned into a mere politician A Gurkha cook who looked after a little tea-house in the Himalayas where I sometimes dropped off my horse to have a cup of tea and get warm after a ride from Darjeeling, insisted that Gandhi's real object in life was merely to

become Maharajah of all India. And the Superintendent of the model prison at Jaipur expressed his convictions with equal certainty. "He is a malicious disturber of peace," said that gentleman, "If he ever dares to come to our State, I will see that very good care is taken of him, very good care indeed!" Rabindranath Tagore and the great scientist, Sir J. C. Bose, neither of whom agrees with Gandhi's narrow nationalistic bias or his economic conceptions, definitely stated to me that his integrity could not be questioned. Whatever the truth of this issue may be, the fact remains that the ignorant masses have come to look upon him as a god. He has cast his shadow over India as a banian tree wide spread and deep rooted.

GANDHI LEGEND IN TIBET

One day the Director of the Royal Library in Calcutta told me a story indicative of the extent and the character of Gandhi's influence. In the interests of the Library, the Director had sent a Tibetan from India to visit various monasteries in an attempt to persuade some of the Lamas to sell their holy books. This man kept a diary, and in it he recorded that he was very often asked whether it was true that Second Buddha has been reincarnated in India and was known as Mahatma Gandhi. The Tibetans said they had heard that he was now

waging war with the English King , but that when his enemies tried to shoot him their arrows passed harmlessly through his body When they tried to crush him by running iron trains over him, he merely stood up twice as strong as before The other answered that, though he had not heard of anything like this and did not believe it was true, certainly there were very many marvels in this distant country of India For himself, he himself had seen automobiles that flew in the air

“Now”, said the Tibetans, “we know that you are lying to us Now we do not believe anything you say” Thus had the Gandhi legend spread in roadless, trackless Tibet

AHMEDABAD

I jolted along, in a springless “gharri,” on my way to have a talk with Gandhi in his own home, I drove for about an hour and a half and then I came to a cluster of isolated houses, some of them yet unfinished, scattered in haphazard fashion on both sides of the road This, my driver told me, was the Satyagraha Asramam It was a bare spot with no beauty except that of the dusty fields and wild horizon and sandy river I saw no one about , so I followed a path that led through a garden of papaya-trees and magenta flowerbeds to the covered verandah of one of the houses The place looked

rather neglected, clean enough, but evidently not occupying the attention of those who lived there. In a swinging settee sat Gandhi's son. He arose and, after disappearing for a moment into a room on the left, returned to say that his father was waiting to see me.

THE ASHRAMA

The Mahatma was sitting on a mattress on the floor, in front of a low table covered with books and papers. He took off his steel-rimmed spectacles and without getting up smiled pleasantly and invited me to sit on a square stool. I preferred the floor, however, and sat down on the piece of faded red-cloth that did service as a carpet. A small spinning wheel and some carded cotton were near the table. Otherwise the room was bare of furniture.

This home of Mr. Gandhi's outside Ahmedabad must, I think be very similar to the one he founded nearly eighteen years ago in Natal. At that time he had been reading Ruskin's "Unto this Last" and conceived the idea of some sort of settlement in the country, where a small community of men and women might live together in spiritual unity. They were to divest themselves of all the artificial trappings of so-called civilization, and in this haven of sanctity and peace, through contact with nature

and by rigid discipline of the body, came nearer to an understanding of divine principles. It was during this period that Gandhi laid upon himself and his family an iron yoke of habit.

He gave away his fortune. He wore the simplest raiment and took only enough food to sustain life. He slept out-doors on a coarse blanket. If one knows India, one can appreciate why the superstitious report has spread that he possesses immaculate powers and that arrows have no power to do him injury.

ITS INMATES AND THEIR OCCUPATION

At the Satyagraha Ashrama Gandhi has gathered around him a curious group of disciples. They have taken eight vows: the vow of truth-seeking, of non-killing, of fearlessness, of "a celibate life, whether married or unmarried, of poverty, and of control of the palate, the vow to use every influence to do away with caste regulations against the Untouchables, which Gandhi believe to be the greatest blot on Hinduism, and finally the Swadeshi-vow patronizing and encouraging home industry. About a hundred persons have become members of the community, but since many of them go out to carry on the work of organization in different parts of India, there are never so many at hand.

GANDHI AND JESUS

It is the transcendent, intellectual and spiritual personality of this man, that strikes every one who beholds him. A letter which I read only this week, written by one who has recently been in India and has stood in the presence of the Mahatma, contains this sentence "He is the most remarkable and impressivie personality I have ever seen in my life." There is something about this man, that radiates like the light of the sun justifying overwhelmingly that he is truly one sent of God.

History furnishes no parallel so striking, as that furnished by Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus of Nazareth. If I believe in the second coming which I do not I should say, here is the Christ manifested in our midst. Reading from Romain Rolland's recent book he pointed out that, only the cross is wanting to him. Everyone knows that, without the Jews, Rome would have refused it to Christ. And the British Empire is like the Roman Empire. The soul of the Eastern peoples has been stirred to its very depths and vibrations are heard all over the earth. One of two things will surely happen either the faith of Gandhi will be crowned with success or it will repeat itself just, as centuries

ago Christ and Buddha were born, in the complete incarnation of a mortal demi-God of a principle of life that will lead future humanity to a safer and more peaceful resting place

Insignificant differences found in these two lives separated by nearly two thousand years From racial stock only remotely to be classified together as oriental, the one was born a proletarian, the other born into the circle of the "intelligentsia " the one with poverty for his portion, the other in early life accustomed to all that wealth and prestige bespeak, the one unmarried, but not an ascetic in any sense of the word, the other married and the father of children, but with an unmistakably bent toward asceticism, an amazing and significant divergence.

TWO ASPECTS

The parallel circumstances of the lives of Gandhi and Jesus from two points of view, first, that of their environment and the outer circumstances of their lives, and secondly, as regards the inner world of the spirit The Palestine of Jesus' time was the home of an oppressed people under Roman rule!

spiritually circumscribed and physically exploited India to-day is British ruled, similarly circumscribed and exploited In the reign of Tiberius there appeared a teacher who went around among the

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

common people who "heard him gladly" The scriptures use time and again the word "multitudes" to picture the scenes when Jesus appeared to the men and women of his time So to-day multitudes follow this man of the Far East Indeed, many gather around him who can by no possible chance get the sound of his voice, but have to be content merely with a glimpse of his form or face As thousands, however followed Jesus in Palestine, millions in India follow Mahatma Gandhi millions of dependent, robbed and (until he came) discouraged folk, now spiritually fed, taught and inspired by this incomparably the greatest religious teacher of our time

IMPERIALISM ON TRIAL

Here was a man who, like Jesus of old, "went about stirring up the people," and, like the opponent of Rome's imperial rule, he was permitted to do this for something like three years before the authorities caused his arrest on the charge of sedition As Jesus foresaw his fate, so too, did the Mahatma and, as the forerunner in the silence of Gethsemane waited the coming of the Roman soldiers, Gandhi amid the quiet of his beloved Ashram calmly waited the officers of the Empire The courage and calm with which the Nazarene "set his face steadfastly toward

Jerusalem" was matched by manner in which the Mahatma welcomed the fate that he knew in his heart was surely to be his. The Roman Judge who saw no wrong in the man of Palestine, was paralleled too by the British Judge whose duty it was to sentence to imprisonment the acknowledged leader of India. But, as in the case of Jesus, it was imperialism that was on trial. The prisoner stood not before a British tribunal, but before the King of Kings. This trial marked the greatest spiritual moment in the history of mankind since Christ's time. It, too, was a crucifixion not on the cross, but after the modern fashion (somewhat improved) which dictates a living death behind prison bars.

SUPREME DEMOCRATS

What was the spiritual entity of their being? Both are supreme democrats, seeing in all humanity, their world, in all men their brothers. As Jesus went freely among the publicans and the fallen women, so the Mahatma mingles with the "untouchables" and answers the call of the prostitutes who would know more of his movement. Both men are supremely self-sacrificing. The call to Jesus to give up his labours and return to his mother and his brethren, equally with the call to Gandhi to go to the bedside of his sick wife, met refusal. Para-

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

mount in the eyes of both were the interests of the larger group of all the sons and the daughters of men Both Gandhı and Jesus have a great love for children "As ye do it unto the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me" might well be said of the man whom all India follows to-day I see the crux of the inner spirits of these two remarkable personalities, each of whom manifested again and again the patience, the suffering and the degradation that characterize the Messiahs, the Mahatmas the "great souls" of all time And this not alone love for friends but love for "enemies," to make use of a word which Gandhı never takes upon his tongue Comparable with the prayer of the crucified Christ, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do" is the utterance of Gandhı when, after the terrible massacre of Amritsar, men, expecting to find hate of General Dyer in the eyes of the Mahatma went to him for an expression of opinion "I hate the thing he has done," was the reply of this exemplar of non-violence and love, "but if he were ill I would go to him and nurse him, and if it were possible heal him" Fourthly, in both these transcendent spiritual figures beside this capacity for love is the divine capacity for sufferings To suffer from to give love to these are the discoveries in their time of the Christ of the ancient and the Christ of the modern world

This most vital of all contributions to the spiritual life of our time the discovery, or rather the re-discovery of the principle of non-violence and its corrolary the power of love, marks the supreme parallel in these two lives This contribution was marked throughout the lives of both men in their efforts to bring in a new society identified with the things of God Their work differed in degree rather than kind Gandhi to-day recognizes this dynamic of love, as did Jesus He is making use of the same principles, but on a greater scale and to a greater end He prophesies the "Kingdom of God on Earth "

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

But that is not all the parallel As always, history repeats itself Two thousand years ago, Roman civilization was beginning to perish of its own excesses and successes , and from among an oppressed and almost hopeless people came the man Jesus, bringing a new spirit of creative life To-day we are living in similar times Modern imperialism, which Gandhi has well called "Satanic," is also due to perish of its success , and from a people diminated by the strongest imperial power of our day, comes, as by the will of God a simple and infinitely great and pure soul from whom flows a new

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

flood of spiritual being His task is, in the mind of his greatest interpreter to save our world as the Man of Galilee saved the ancient world That *he is the Chnst of modern times can not be disputed.* The question that presents itself is not the acceptance of this already widely recognized fact The question before mankind to-day is are we to recognize him now that he has come again.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S JAIL EXPERIENCES

FIRST EXPERIENCE

Although I and several of my Indian companions have seen the inside of a gaol for only a few days, in our fight for Passive Resistance, I have thought it proper to jot down some of my experiences in deference to the demands of many, and with a view also that they might prove of use to others. It is the general belief that the Indian community will have to secure many of its rights and privileges by going to jail and therefore it is advisable to learn its good and bad sides. Many times it happens that where there is no real unhappiness, our mind only creates it, and hence it is much better to know the truth in such cases.

On the 10th of January, after two efforts had been made, in the afternoon, to throw us into Jail, we were at last taken there. Before I and my companions were sentenced, a wire had already been received from Pretoria, that the Indians who were arrested there for disobeying the New Law, had been sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment and to pay a fine, or in default of

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

paying the same, to a further imprisonment for three months. This had made me very impatient and I solicited the Magistrate to give me the maximum punishment, but he did not yield to my request, and we were sentenced only two months' simple imprisonment. My companions were Messrs P K Naidu, C M Pillay, Kadva, Eston and Foretoon (the last two being Chinese,) I was kept in the lock up in the rear of the Court-house for about four minutes after the sentence had been pronounced, and from there removed secretly in a carriage. At that time I became a prey to many thoughts whether they would treat me as a political offender or keep me separate from the others, or remove me from Johannesburg to some other place? The detective who accompanied me was apologising, but I told him he had no need to do so, as it was his duty to take me to prison.

THE JAIL

I soon found out that all my inferences were wrong, as I was taken to the place where others were ordinarily taken. In a short time my other companions were brought there, and we all met. We were first weighed, then our finger marks were taken, there-after we were stripped entirely naked, and then given Jail clothes, consisting of black

trousers, a shirt, a shirt cover, called "Jumper," a cap and a pair of socks. Each one of us was given a bag in which to pack up our old clothes. We were then given a piece of bread 8 oz. in weight and taken to our cells, in the Kaffir jail.

KAFFIRS AND INDIANS IN ONE PLACE

The letter "N" was then stamped on our clothes, and we were thus officially placed in the ranks of the Natives. We were prepared to suffer many indignities, but had never thought that we should be degraded to this pitch. We can very well understand that we could not be treated as the "Whites," but that we should be placed on the same level with Kaffirs appeared an insufferable insult to us. This led us to conclude that our fight for Justice, our Passive Resistance was neither unreasonable nor untimely, and we got further proof of the fact that the Law was intended to make the Indians entirely "harmless." Still being kept with the Kaffirs was a ground for satisfaction in a way, as we thus got a good opportunity to learn their condition, the way in which they were treated, and their nature. My own mind would not tolerate the idea of there being any indignity in being placed in the same level with them, but still, looking at the fact in a general way, I should think that the

Indians should undoubtedly be kept separate. The cells of the Kaffirs adjoined ours, and the cells and the area outside were full of their roars and noises. It was only because our terms were of simple imprisonment that our cells were separate from theirs, otherwise we should have been interned with them. Indians with a term of rigorous imprisonment are kept with them. Even if the fact of such treatment being insulting be kept apart, still it is sufficient to say that it is very risky. These Kaffirs are mostly savages, and those who come to prison are if possible, more so. They are wild, dirty and very nearly in the condition of animals. In one cell from 50 to 60 prisoners are kept and at times they kick up a row in the cell and fight amongst themselves. The reader can very easily picture the state of the poor Indian in such circumstances.

OTHER INDIAN PRISONERS

There were hardly three or four other Indian prisoners, besides us. They were in a worse plight than ours, in this respect that they were kept with the Kaffirs. Still I could see that they lived pleasantly, and had improved in health. They were in the good graces of the prison authorities, and as they were more experienced and intelligent

in doing the (Jail) work than their fellow prisoners, they were given good work inside the premises. They had either to supervise the working of the machines in the stores, or do some such other work, which was neither heavy nor dirty. They proved of great use to us also.

OUR LODGINGS

We were given a cell, which could contain thirteen persons. It was superscribed "For Black Debtors," which meant that it was mostly used for the black civil prisoners. It had two small strongly barred windows, for light and air, but in my opinion the same could not be called sufficient ventilation. Its walls were of corrugated iron sheets, and they contained in three places half-inch holes with glass panes, through which the jailors could see secretly the movements of the prisoners. The cell next to ours was occupied by Kaffirs, and near it were kept, in a room, Kaffir, Chinese, and Capeboy witnesses, as prisoners, to prevent their making themselves scarce.

A small walled area was set apart for our exercise during day time. It was so small that it was with difficulty we could move about in it. The rule was that the prisoners could not leave the area without permission. Arrangements for bath and

lavatory were also included in this compound. For our bath, there were two stone cisterns, and two shower bath pipes. For natural purposes was kept a bucket, and as a urinal, two more buckets provided. There was no arrangement by which we could preserve our privacy and take a bath or answer a call of nature. The Jail regulations also provided, that there should be no arrangement for lavatory, etc., by which the inmates would have to be separated even for that purpose, so that it often happened that two or three inmates had to sit down together in a row to answer a call. The same inconvenience attended our bath. The urinal bucket was also in the open space. All this might at the first blush, look unpleasant and to some even appear distressful, but looking into the matter a little more considerately, it will appear that in Jail it is not possible to have privacy of this nature, and also that there is nothing to be ashamed of in doing these things publicly. I think we must patiently cultivate this state of mind, and should not mind or be annoyed at publicity.

We were given plank beds with feet three inches in height for sleeping on, in the cell, two blankets and a small pillow per head, with a coir mat. At times it was possible to have three blankets, but that was a matter of grace. Some of my companions were annoyed at these hard beds,

and it was natural in the case of those who were accustomed to soft beds. But according to medical science a hard bed is more advisable, and so if at home we accustom ourselves to the use of hard beds, such beds in a jail would not annoy us. At night it was usual to place in our cell, one bucket of water and one bucket in a large tray to be used as a urinal, as no prisoner was allowed to go out at night. Each one was also given, if he wanted it, some soap, a thick towel, and a wooden spoon.

CLEANLINESS

The jail was kept very clean. Every day the cell-floors were washed with disinfectants and their sides lime-washed, so that they always appeared new. The baths and lavatories also were kept clean, by means of soap and disinfectants. I believe I have a love for cleanliness, so that when later on, many more of our Indian brethren joined us, I took it upon myself to clean the lavatories every day with germ killing fluids. At nine o'clock regularly, several Chinese prisoners used to come to take away the night soil buckets, but if after that, we wanted to keep the place clean, we had to do so ourselves. The bed planks were always cleaned with sand and water. The only objectionable thing was that one's pillow and blankets

always stood the chance of being changed with those of hundreds of other inmates. The rule that blankets should always be aired and sun-dried was hardly observed. The area was always swept twice.

SOME RULES

Some of the jail rules are worth knowing by all. The prisoners were interned at half-past five in the evening. It was possible after that hour either to read or talk till eight, but after eight, it was the duty of every one to go to sleep. Even if one did not get sleep, one had to lie down idle and silent, as any talk after eight was considered a breach of the rule. Kaffir prisoners do not obey this rule properly, so that the night watchmen have always to stamp their sticks on the walls and cry out "Thoola, Thoola" to keep them silent. Smoking was strictly prohibited and the rule strictly enforced but still I saw that prisoners addicted to the habit secretly broke the rule. A bell is struck at half past five in the morning to rouse the prisoners. They have then to get up, wash their faces and hands, and make up their beds. At six the cell door is opened, when each one is expected to stand civilly by his made up bed. The warder counts the number. At the time of closing in also the same

procedure is followed. No other articles excepting those belonging to the jail should be found in possession of the inmate excepting with the permission of the governor of the jail. To one of the buttons of the prisoner's "jumper" is sewed on a bag, wherein his prisoner's ticket is kept containing his name, number, term of imprisonment, etc. Generally, during the daytime no one is allowed to live in the cell. Prisoners with hard labour, being on the works outside, cannot be expected to occupy them, but even those without any such labour are not allowed to use it. They have to pass their time in the open area. The Governor had kindly allowed us, for our convenience, a table and two benches in our cell, and they proved of great use.

A prisoner sentenced to two months is called upon to have the hair of his head and moustache cut, but this is not rigidly enforced against Indians. If any one be unwilling his moustaches are left untouched. I had a humorous experience of this. I knew that the hair and moustache were cut in the interests of the prisoners themselves and not with a view to give them any offence. I believe it is a very wholesome rule, because in the jail, there are no combs, etc., to clean the hair, and if the hair be not kept clean, there is a danger of boils, etc., appearing. Again, during hot days, heavy hair is inconvenient. The prisoners get no mirrors, and

there is the chance of the moustaches remaining dirty, no serviettes or napkins being provided at meals, the wooden spoon is more of an inconvenience than convenience while eating and if the moustaches are long, food sticks to them. As I had a mind to see every phase of prison life I asked the chief warder's permission to cut my hair and moustache. He said, the governor had prohibited it. I said, I knew that he did not want to force me to do it but I wanted to cut them voluntarily. He asked me to apply to the governor, and I got his permission the next day, but he said that as two days out of my two month's sentence had already expired he had no power to cut my hair. I replied that I knew it but I wanted to do so voluntarily and for my own good. But he still laughed and hesitated. I afterwards learnt that he viewed the request with some suspicion. He thought I might after going out, charge him with having compelled me to do so, forcibly. I persisted in my request, and said that I was ready to give it to him in writing that I cut the hair of my own accord. At last his suspicion was removed, and he ordered a pair of (horse) clippers to be given to me.

My companion Mr P K Naidu knew perfectly the barber's art, and I knew a little also. Learning the reason of my doing so, others followed, some of them cut their hair only. I and Mr Naidu every

day spent two hours in cutting the hair of our Indian companions. I believe this led to an increase of health and convenience, the prisoners appeared tidy. The use of the razor was strictly prohibited, only scissors were used.

INSPECTION

When the different inspectors come to inspect all the prisoners have to post themselves in a row, and take off their caps to salute them. As all of us had English caps, there was no difficulty in observing this rule. It was both legal and proper that we should take off our caps. The words of direction used were "fall in." These words had so to speak become our food, as we had to "fall in" four or five times a day. One of these officers, an assistant to the Chief Warder, was a little stiff-necked and so the Indians had nicknamed him, "General Smuts." Generally he was the first to come in the mornings, and again in the evenings. At half past nine the Doctor came. He was very good and kind, and unfailing in his inquiries. Each prisoner had according to jail rules to show all parts of his body, on the first day to the Doctor stripping himself bare of all clothes, but he was kind enough not to enforce this in our case. When many more Indians had come, he simply told us to report to him if any

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

one had got itch, etc , so that he might examine him in *camera* At half past ten or eleven, the governor and the chief warder came The former was a firm, just and quiet-natured officer His invariable inquiries were whether we were all right, whether we wanted anything, whether we had any complaints to make Whenever we had any such, he heard them attentively, and gave us relief, if he could Some of these complaints and grievances I shall refer to later on His deputy came also at times ' He was kind-hearted too But the best of them all was our Chief Warder Himself deeply religious, he was kind and courteous towards us, and every prisoner sung his praises in no measured terms He was attentive in preserving to the prisoners all their rights, he overlooked their trivial faults, and knowing in our case that we were all innocent he was particularly kind to us, and to show his kindness he often came and talked to us

INCREASE IN OUR NUMBERS

I have said before that there were only five of us passive resisters, at first On 14th January, Tuesday, came in Mr Thambi Naidu, then the Chief Picket and Mr Koin, the President of the Chinese Association We all were pleased to receive them On the 18th, fourteen others joined us, including

Samundar Khan He was in for two months The rest were Madrasis, Kunamias and Gujarati Hindus They were arrested for hawking without licenses, and sentenced to pay a fine of £2, and in default to 14 days' imprisonment They had bravely elected to go to jail On 21st 76 others came In this batch only Nawab Khan had two months, the rest with a fine of £2 or in default of 24 days' imprisonment Most of them were Gujarati Hindus, some Kunamias and some Madrasis. On the 22nd, 35, on the 23rd, 3, on 24th, 2, on 25th, 2, on 28th, 6, and in the evening 4 more, and on 29th, 4 Kunamias added to our numbers So that by the 28th there were 155 passive resisters incarcerated On the 30th. I was removed to Pretoria, but I knew that on that day 5 or 6 others had come in

FOOD

The question of food is of great moment to many of us in all circumstances, but to those in prison, it is of the greatest importance They are greatly in need of good food The rule is that a prisoner has to rest content with jail food, he cannot procure any from outside The same is the case with a soldier who has to submit to his regulation rations, but the difference between the two is that his friends can send other food to the soldier and

he can take it, while a prisoner is prohibited from doing so. So that this prohibition about food is one of the essential conditions of prison life. Even in general conversation, you will find the jail officers, saying that there could be no exercise of taste about prison diet. In a talk with the prison medical officer, I told him that it was necessary for us to have some tea, or ghee or some such thing along with bread, and he said, "you want to eat palatable things. That cannot be allowed in a prison."

According to the regulations, in the first week, an Indian gets, in the morning, 12 oz, of "mealie pap" without sugar or ghee, at noon 4 oz of rice and one oz of ghee in the evening, for 4 days, 12 oz, or boiled beans, and salt. This scale is modelled on the dietary of the Kaffirs. The only difference is that in the evening the Kaffirs are given crushed maize corn and lard or fat, while the Indians get rice. In the second week, and thence forward, for two days, boiled potatoes and for two days, cabbages or pumpkin or some such vegetable is given along with maize flour. Those who take meat are given meat with vegetables on Sundays.

The first batch of prisoners had resolved to solicit for no favours at the hands of Government, and to take whatever food was served out, if not religiously objectionable. Really speaking the above was not a proper kind of diet for Indians though

medically of course it contained sufficient nutrition. Maize is the daily food of the Kaffirs, so this diet suits them. We are not used to eat beans alone nor could we like vegetables as cooked by or for Kaffirs. They never clean the vegetable which mostly consist of the peelings left after the same have been prepared for the European convicts. For spices nothing else besides salt is given. Sugar is never dreamt of. Thus the food question was a very difficult one for us all. Still as we had determined that the passive resisters were neither to solicit nor ask for favours from the Jail authorities, we tried to rest content with this kind of food.

In reply to his inquiries we had told the governor, that the food did not suit us but we were determined not to ask for any favours from Government. If Government of its own accord wanted to make a change, it would be welcome, else we would go on taking the regulation diet.

But this determination could not last long. When others joined us we thought it would be improper to make them share this trouble also with us. Was it not sufficient that they had shared the prison with us? So we began to talk to the governor on their behalf. We told him, we were prepared to take any kind of food, but the latter batches could not do so. He thought over the matter and said that he would allow them to cook

separately if they put in on the ground of religion but the articles of food would be the same, as it did not rest with him to make any change in them

In the meantime, fourteen others had joined us and some of them elected to starve rather than take mealie pap. So I read the jail rules and found out that applications in such matters should be made to the Director of Prisons. I asked therefore the governor to be permitted to apply to him and sent the following petition

"We the undersigned prisoners beg to state that we are all Asiatics 18 Indians and 3 Chinese

"The eighteen Indians get for their breakfast mealie pap, and the others, rice and ghee, they get beans thrice and "pap," four times. We were given potatoes on Saturdays and greens on Sundays. On religious grounds, we cannot eat meat some are entirely prohibited from taking it, and others cannot do so because of its not being religiously slaughtered

"The Chinese get maize corn instead of rice. All the prisoners are mostly used to European food and they also eat bread and other flour preparations. None of us is used to mealie pap, and some of us suffer from indigestion

"Seven of us have eaten no breakfast at all, only at times, when the Chinese prisoners who got bread, out of mercy, gave them a piece or two out of

their rations, have we eaten the same When this was mentioned to the governor, he said we were guilty of a jail offence in thus accepting bread

“In our opinion this kind of food is entirely unsuitable to us So we have to apply that we should be given food according to the rules for European prisoners and mealie pap be left out entirely , or in the alternative such food should be given as would support us, and be in consonance with our habits and customs

“This is an urgent matter and a reply may be sent by wire ”

Twenty-one of us had signed this petition and while it was being despatched seventy six more came in They also had a dislike for the “pap,” and so we added a paragraph stating that the new arrivals also objected to the diet I requested the governor to send it by wire He asked his superior’s permission by telephone, and allowed at once 4 oz, of bread in place of “pap ” We were all very pleased, and from the 22nd, 4 oz , of bread was substituted in place of pap, morning and evening In the evening we got 8 oz , i e , half a loaf But this was merely a temporary arrangement A committee was sitting on the question and we heard that they had recommended an allowance of flour, ghee, rice and pulse , but before it could take effect,

we had been released, and so nothing more happened

In the beginning when there was only eight of us we did not cook ourselves, so we used to get uncooked rice and ill-cooked vegetables whenever the same were given, so we obtained permission to cook for ourselves. On the first day, Mr Kadva cooked. After that Mr. Thambi Naidu and Mr Jivan both took up the function, and in our last days they had to cook once only, excepting on vegetable days which were two in a week, when they had to do so twice. Mr Naidu took great trouble over this. I used to serve

From the style of the petition the reader must have noted the fact that it was presented on behalf of all Indian prisoners and not us (eight) alone. We talked with the governor also on the same lines and he promised to look into it for all the Asiatic prisoners. We still hope that the jail diet of the Indians would be improved.

Again the three Chinese used to get other articles instead of rice, and hence annoyance was felt, as there was an appearance of their being considered separate from and inferior to us. For this reason, I applied, on their behalf, to the governor and to Mr Playford, and it was ordered that they should be placed on the same level as Indians.

It is instructive to compare this dietary with

that of the Europeans They get for their morning breakfast "pap" and 8 oz , of bread , for the midday meal, bread and soup or bread and meat, or bread and meat and potatoes or vegetables , and in the evening bread and "pap " Thus they get bread thrice in the day, and so they do not care whether they have the "pap" or not. Again they get meat or soup in addition Besides this they are often given tea or cocoa This will show that both the Europeans and the native Kaffirs get food suitable to them, and it is the poor Indians alone who suffer They had no special dietary of their own If they were treated like Europeans in food, the Europeans would have felt ashamed, and no one had the concern to find out what was the food of the Indian They had thus to be ranked with the Kaffirs and silently starve For this state of circumstances I find fault with our own people the Passive Resisters Some Indians got the requisite food by stealth, others put up with whatever they got, and were either ashamed to make public the story of their distress or had no thought for others Hence the outside public remained in the dark If we were to follow truth and agitate where we got injustice, there would be no such inconveniences If we were to leave self and apply ourselves to the good of others, grievances would get remedied soon But just as it is necessary to take steps for the redress

of such complaints, so it is necessary to think of certain other things also. It is but meet for prisoners to undergo certain inconveniences. If there be no trouble, what is the good of being called a prisoner? Those who are the masters of their minds, take pleasure even in suffering, and live happily in jails. They do not lose sight of the existence of the suffering, and they should not do so, considering that there are others also suffering with them.

There is another evil habit of ours, and that is our tenacity in sticking to our manners and customs. We must do in Rome as the Romans do. We are living in South Africa and we must accustom ourselves to what is considered good food here. "Mealie Pap" is a food, simple and cheap as our wheat. We cannot say it is without taste, sometimes it beats wheat even, it is my belief that out of respect for the country of our adoption, we must take food which grows in that country, if it be not unwholesome. Many "Whites" like this "Pap" and eat it in the morning. It becomes palatable if milk or sugar or even ghee be taken with it. For these reasons and for the fact that we might have to go to jail again, in the future, it is advisable for every Indian to accustom himself to this preparation of maize. With this habit even when the time comes to take it merely with salt, we would not find it hard to do so. It is incumbent on us to leave off some

of our habits for the good of our country All those nations that have advanced have given up these things where there was nothing substantial to lose The Salvation Army people attract the natives of the soil, by adopting their customs, dress, etc , if not particularly objectionable

SICKNESS

It would have been a miracle had no one out of 150 prisoners fallen ill The first to be taken ill was Mr Samundar Khan He had been brought into jail ailing and was taken to hospital the next day. Mr Kadva was a victim to rheumatism, and for some days he did not mind being treated by the doctor in the prison cell itself, but eventually he had to go to the Hospital too Two others suffered from fainting fits and were taken there The reason was that it was very hot then, and the convicts had to remain out in the sun the whole day, and so they fell down in fits We nursed them as best we could Later on Mr Nawab Khan also succumbed, and on the day of our release he had to be led out by hand He had improved a little after the doctor had ordered milk, etc , to be given to him On the whole, still, it may be safely said, that the Passive Resisters fared well

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

PAUCITY OF SPACE

I have stated already that our cell had space enough to accommodate only fiftyone and there were one hundred and fiftyone souls to be accommodated. Great difficulty was felt. The governor had to pitch tents outside, and many had to go there. During our last days, about a hundred had to be taken out to sleep, and back again the morning. The area space was too small for this number, and we would pass our time there with great difficulty. Added to this was our evil persistent habit of spitting everywhere, which rendered the place filthy, and there was the danger of disease breaking out. Fortunately our companions were amenable to advice, and assisted us in keeping the ground clean. Scrupulous care was exercised in inspecting the area and privies, and this saved the inmates from disease. Every one will admit that the Government was at fault in incarcerating such a large number in so narrow a space. If room was insufficient, it was incumbent on the Government not to send so many there, and if the struggle had been prolonged, it would not have been possible for the Government to commit any more to this prison.

READING

I have already mentioned that the governor had allowed us the use of a table, with pen, ink, etc.

We had the free run of the prison library also I had taken from there, the works of Carlyle and the Bible From the Chinese Interpreter, who used to come there, I had borrowed the Kuran-e-Sharif translated into English Speeches of Huxley, Carlyle's Lives of Burns, Johnson, and Scott, and Bacon's Essays Of my own I had taken the Bhagwad Gita, with Monilal Nathubhai's Annotations, several Tamil works, an Urdu book from the Moulavi Sahib, the writings of Tolstoy, Ruskin and Socrates Many of these I read and re-read in the Jail I used to study Tamil regularly In the morning I used to read the Gita and at noon, mostly the Koran In the evening I taught the Bible to Mr Foretoon, who was a Chinese Christian He wanted to learn English, and I taught it to him through the Bible If I had been permitted to spend out my full period I would have been able to complete my translations of a book each of Carlyle and Ruskin I believe that as I was fully occupied in the study of the above works, I would not have become tired even if I had got more than two months, not only that but I would have added usefully to my knowledge and studies I would have passed a happy life, believing as I do that whoever has a taste for reading good books is able to bear loneliness, in any place with great ease

Besides myself, my other companions who had

a taste for reading were Mr Pillay and Mr Naidu and the Chinese Mr Naidu had begun to study Gujarati Towards the end several Gujarati song-books had come, which were utilised by many but I do not consider it to be a study in any way

EXERCISE

It was not allowed to spend the whole day in the jail, in reading I know that if it were allowed, it would have proved detrimental to our health also, so with great difficulty I obtained the Governor's permission to learn exercise (gymnastics) from the warder As he was a very kind officer, he exercised us at drill morning and evening It proved of great benefit, and if it only had continued for a longer time, it would have profited all of us greatly But as the number went on increasing, his duties also increased, and the area became too small for the purpose and the drill had to be stopped But as Mr Nawab Khan was with us, we still persisted in drilling ourselves privately

We had also with the governor's permission undertaken to use sewing machines and were learning the making of prisoner's bags, Mr T Naidu and Mr Easton were quick at learning these things, but I took some time to do so Before I could learn it well, our number swelled, and I had to leave it

off From this it will be seen that where there is a will there is a way, and if only a prisoner were to search after and do one work after another work not only would he find the time not hang heavily on his hands but he would go out from Jail with his knowledge and ability increased There are instances of men with good intention coming out from jail after having performed memorable deeds, e g , John Bunyan with his immortal book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, in confinement, Mr Tilak with his "Orion," in jail also Thus enjoying happiness or otherwise, in prison or outside, to a great extent, lies in our own hands

VISITS

Some Englishmen used to come to see us The rule is that within a month, no one is allowed to call on a prisoner , after that one Sunday in a month is allowable only for one visitor, the rule being open to exceptions under special circumstances Mr Phillips took advantage of the same, and obtained permission, the next day of our confinement, to see Mr Foretoon who is a Chinese-Christian He took advantage of the opportunity to see us also, and cheered us with words of encouragement, and then prayed for us He called on us thrice and so did Mr Davis, another *Padri*

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

Mr Polak and Mr Cohen came to see us also after obtaining special leave, the visit being limited only to office purposes, visitors are allowed only in company of the warders and our talk takes place in their presence

Mr Cart-Wright, the Editor of the "Transval Leader" called on us thrice after getting special permission. He was coming to talk about a settlement and hence we could see him privately in the absence of the warder. His first visit was in respect of the attitude to be taken up by the Indian Community. On his second visit he had brought a draft settled by himself and other English gentlemen. After modifying it, Mr Koin, Mr Naidu and I signed the same. This draft and our signatures have been much discussed elsewhere, so I need not dilate on the subject here.

Mr Playford, the Chief Magistrate, had also come once. He is officially authorised to visit jails, and we cannot say he had called specially to see us. Still we were told that as we all were there, he had specially found time for a call at the jail.

RELIGIOUS STUDY

In the West, we now see, that as a matter of fact, the state looks after the religion of all its prisoners, and hence, we find a church in the

Johannesberg prison for its inmates, but it is provided to meet only the needs of the Whites, who alone are allowed access thereto. I asked for special permission for Mr Foretoon and myself, but the governor told me it was only for *white* Christian prisoners. Every Sunday, they attend it and preachers of different denominations give them religious lessons there.

Several missionaries come in to convert the Kaffirs also, with special permission. There is no church for them, they sit in the open. Jews also have got their own preachers to look after them. It is only the Hindus and Mahomedans who are spiritually left unprovided for. There are not many Indian prisoners it is true, but the absence of any such provision for them is hardly creditable to them. The leaders of both communities should therefore lay their heads together, and arrange for the religious instruction of the members of their community in jail, even if there be only one convict. The preachers, whether Hindus or Moulvis, should be pure-hearted, and they should be careful not to become thorns in the sides of the convicts.

THE END

All that is worth knowing has been stated above, Indians being placed on a level with the

Kaffirs is a fact which calls for further consideration. While the white convicts get a bedstead to sleep on, a tooth-brush to clean their teeth, a towel to wipe their faces and hands, and also a handkerchief, Indian gets nothing. Why this distinction?

We should never think that this is not a matter for our interference. It is these little things which either enhance our respect or degrade us. An Arabic book says that he who has no self-respect has no religion. Nations have become great by gradually enhancing their self-respect. Self-respect does not mean vanity or rashness, but a state of mind which is prepared not to let go its privileges simply out of fear or idleness. One who has really his trust in God, attains to self-respect, and I firmly believe that one who has no trust in Him never knows what is right, nor does he know how to do right.

SECOND EXPERIENCE

PREFACIORY

I consider the experience I gained this time much better than the one I had in January last, as I have learnt much from it and I think it would prove of greater benefit to Indians

The struggle by passive resistance is possible to be carried on in many ways, but the great remedy for redressing political wrongs seems to lie in passing through the ordeal of imprisonment I believe that we shall have to go to jail often, and that also not in the present cause only, but for wrongs which might be inflicted in future too For this purpose it is the duty of every Indian to try to know as much as possible about Jails

ARREST

When Mr Sorabji was arrested I wished that I too were arrested or that the struggle might end before he was released But I was disappointed The same which again came over me when the brave leaders of Natal were arrested, and this time it was fulfilled On my return from Durban, I was arrested on the 7th of October in the Volksrust

Station, as I had not got a voluntary certificate with me and refused to give my finger marks.

My object in going to Durban was to bring back from Natal the educated Indians, and also those who were the old residents of Transval. I had hopes that many Indians from there would follow their Natal Leaders. Government also was of the same opinion, and therefore the jailor had orders to make arrangements for the accommodation of more than a hundred Indians, and tents, blankets, utensils etc., were sent on from Pretoria. When I got down at Volksrust with my companions I found many policemen in the Station. But all their preparations were useless, as I was accompanied by very few Indians and the Police and the Jailor were disappointed. There were six with me, and eight more started by the next train from Durban, so that there were fourteen of us only. We were arrested and taken to the Jail, and placed before the Magistrate next day. The hearing was adjourned for seven days. We declined to be released on bail. Two days after, Mr. Mavji Kursanji Kothari, who in spite of suffering from piles had elected to come with us, on his ailment becoming more serious, and there being the need of a picket at Volksrust, was sent out on bail.

THE JAIL

When we went in, we saw there Mr Dawood Mahamad, Mr Rustamji, Mr Angalia (with whom began the second instalment of the struggle,) Mr Sorabji Adjanai, and about 25 more Indians. It was the month of Ramzan and the Mohammedans were keeping day-fast, and as by special permission they were allowed to take food supplied in the evening by Mr Isap Suleman Kazi, they were able to observe their fast properly. It is not allowable to burn lights in outside jails, still on account of Ramzan they were allowed to keep lights and a clock. Mr Angalia led them in prayer. Those who kept fast were in their first days given heavy work, but afterwards it was stopped.

For the rest of the Indians, permission had been granted to cook separately, so that Mr Umiya-shanker Shelat, and Mr Surendra Ray Medh and latterly when there was an increase in our unumbers, Mr Joshi, were doing the work. When they were deported, Mr Ratansi Sodha, Mr Raghavji and Mr Mavji Kothari took their places, and latterly, due to increase in numbers, Mr Lalbhai and Mr Umar Osman had to assist them. These gentlemen had to get up at 2 or 3 A M and again be engaged in it till 5 or 6 P M. When many of the prisoners were discharged, Mr Musa Isakji and Imam Saheb Bawa-

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

zeer took charge of this department I consider them fortunate who thus were able to partake of food cooked by such distinguished persons as the President of the Islamic Hamidia Society and well-known merchants. When they left, their legacy descended to me, but as I had some experience in the line, I felt no trouble in cooking. I had only to do it for four days only, as now (at the writing of this) my son, Mr. Harilal Gandhi attends to it.

When we entered, there were only 3 sleeping cells, in which the Indians had been accommodated. In this jail, Indians and Kaffirs were kept apart.

ARRANGEMENTS IN THE JAIL

There are two divisions of the male prisoner's wards, one for whites, and another for Kaffirs, which includes all the non-whites. Thus, though still the jailor had accommodated them in the division of the whites. There are cells or rooms for prisoners, and each cell has accommodation for 10, 15, or even more, prisoners. The building is of stone, the cells are high, white plastered walls, and as the floor is daily washed, it remains very clean. The walls are often lime-washed and hence always present a fresh appearance. The area or space in front flagged with black stones, and is washed daily. It has also accommodation for three persons to bathe.

together , two lavatones, and benches for sitting. Above it, is a barbed wire netting, to prevent prisoners escaping by scaling the wall Each cell is well ventilated in point of light and air The prisoners are placed in their cells at 6 P M , and they are opened again at 5 A M They are locked from outside, and any call of nature has to be answered in the cell, for which pots are provided filled with germ-killing fluids

FOOD

When I entered the Volksrust jail, the Indian prisoners there used to get 'mealie pap' in the morning, and at noon, and in the evening, rice and some vegetables, which mainly consisted of potatoes Ghee was not given at all

Those who were under trial, got over and above this food, one oz , of sugar, in the morning, and ½lb , of bread at noon Out of these two, some of the "under-trials" gave a portion to those who were undergoing sentences They had a right to get meat twice, but as neither the Hindus nor Mohamadans partook of it, they got nothing in its place, though they should have been given something We, therefore, petitioned, and were soon ordered to get an allowance of one oz , of ghee, and on meat days, instead of meat, ½lb, of beans.

There was a Gujarati green growing spontaneously in the jail compound, which we were allowed to utilise, and also occasionally, the use of onions growing there, was permitted. So after getting these concessions for ghee and beans, there could not be said to be much of a complaint for food. The diet of the Johannesburg Jail was somewhat different. (It had been referred to before.)

These rations, though not proper, according to our habits and customs, cannot still be condemned as bad. Many Indians have hatred of mealie pap and they do not eat it. But I call it a mistake. This "pap" is a sweet and nutritious food. In South Africa it takes the place of wheat, and if it be mixed with sugar, it becomes very tasty, but even without sugar, when one is hungry, it tastes sweet. If one gets accustomed to it, not only is there no danger of one remaining hungry when one gets it, but it strengthens one's body. If only some changes could be made in it, it is likely to prove a perfect food. But the true fact is that we have become so accustomed to tasty foods, and we have patted our habits so much on the back, that when we do not get food to which we are accustomed, we lose our temper. I came across this experience in the Volksrust Jail, and it pained me much. Lamentations were often loudly poured out on this account, and people seemed to think as if life con-

sisted merely in partaking of good food or that they lived solely to eat. This is not conduct befitting a Passive Resister. It is our duty to ask for suitable changes to be made in the dietary, but if none be made we should not grumble thereat, but rest content with what we get and point out to the Government that such matters would not make us lose our hearts or give up the fight. There are some Indians who are afraid to go to jail merely because of this inconvenience of food. It behoves them deliberately to give up any luxurious habits they might have formed in this respect and thus take away the sting from imprisonment.

PAKKA PRISON

As I have said above, our case was postponed for a week. It was heard on the 14th October, when some Indians were sentenced to one month and others to six weeks' rigorous imprisonment. A small boy of eleven got 14 days' simple imprisonment. I was all the while feeling anxious, that I should be deprived of the opportunity of going to jail, as there was a rumour of the charge against me being withdrawn. After the cases of the others were disposed of, some other cases were adjourned, and this made me more anxious. The rumour first was that I should be charged with failure to show a

registered certificate and giving finger prints, and also with attempting to import other unregistered Indians into the Transval I was thinking about all these matters, when the Magistrate took his seat again and my case was called up I was find £ 25. or in default to undergo two months' rigorous imprisonment This pleased me very much, and I considered myself lucky in being able to share the prison with my brethren

DRESS

Our prison dress consisted of a short, strong pair of trousers, a rough shirt, a "jumper," cap, towel, a pair of socks and sandals I thought this dress admirably suited a man who had to work It was strong and simple, and we can have no complaint to make against it, and we should never be tired of putting it on, even if it were for ever The whites get different clothes They get a rimmed cap, and stockings with a pair of towels in addition to a handkerchief The Indians also stand in need of a handkerchief

LABOUR

Government are entitled to exact nine hours' wrok from a prisoner with hard labour Prisoners are put into their cells at 6 P M , a bell for rising

is struck at 5-30 A M , and at 6 A M , the doors are thrown open Both at the time of going in and coming out, their number is counted In order to facilitate it each one is asked to stand near his bed, after having washed his hands and face, and made up his bed At seven he has to start work, which is of many kinds On the first day we were taken to dig up an open piece of land, near the high road, for purposes of tilling About 30 of us were taken, but those who were unable to work were not compelled to go Our companions were Kaffirs The ground was hard, and we had to dig with spades The work was hard, it was very hot, and the scene of our operation was about a mile and a half from the jail We all fell to with rapidity, but as very few were habituated to this sort of labour, we were very much exhausted Our batch included Rasi Krishna, a son of Babu Talevent Singh I felt much pained at seeing him doing the work, still the trouble he took over it pleased me As the day advanced, we felt that the burden increasing Our warder was sharp-tempered and he was keeping on shouting "go on, go on" The Indians became more and more confused at his shouts, and some began to weep The leg of one became swollen My mind was considerably affected, still I continued advising the others not to mind the warder but do their work conscientiously I myself was exhausted,

and my hands became full of bruises and boils and water began to flow from the same. Even to try to bend down became difficult and I felt as if the spade weighed a maund in my hand. I was all the while praying that I should not be disabled but given strength to do my share of the work conscientiously. On the strength of these prayers I was going on doing my work but the warder began to thump me. As I was taking a little rest, he upbraided me. I told him there was no need to do so, as I was determined on doing the utmost I could. At this time I saw Mr. Jhinabhai Desai going off into a swoon, I had not the permission to move from my place, but I stopped from my work for a moment. The warder went there, I felt that I must go. So I ran up, and two other Indians came up also. We sprinkled water on him and his senses returned. The warder, sent back the others to their places but allowed me to sit by his side. I poured a deal of cold water over his head and this relieved him. I told the warder that he would not be able to walk back, so a carriage was procured and I was ordered to take him to the jail. While pouring water over his head, I could not help thinking that it was on my advice that so many of the Indians had come to jail, and what a great sin I was committing if I was giving them wrong advice. Was it not on my account that the Indians were undergoing all this

suffering? I heaved a heavy sigh at these thoughts but taking God to witness the sincerity of my advice I began to cheer up again, and felt I was in the right. If out of evil came good, there was no harm in suffering. I saw that Jhinabhai's case was merely one of a swoon, but even if death were to result from the course of conduct adopted, I would not have been in a position to advise differently. I lost all feelings of sorrow at considering that it was our duty to throw off the fetters of a nation by undergoing pain and suffering and should not complain even if we had to remain in bonds for our whole life-time. These considerations revived my drooping spirits and I again began to put heart into Jhinabhai.

As soon as the carriage came, Jhinabhai was made to lie down in it and taken away. A complaint was made to the Chief Warder and he reprimanded his subordinates. Jhinabhai was not taken to the works at noon, and like him four other Indians were also found disabled. The rest had to begin work again. We were given one hour, 12 to 1, for our meals, and had to work again from 1 to 5. At noon we were placed in charge of a Kaffir warder instead of a white one, and he proved to be better. He did not prod us often, nor did he speak much. Again the Kaffirs and Indians, though made to work in the same place, were at noon, divided into two

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

different lots, and we were given comparatively softer land to dig

The man who had taken this contract had a talk with me, and he told me that there was a possibility of his suffering by Indian labour, because he admitted that in physical work the Indian was not, on an emergency, the equal of the Kaffir. I also told him that the Indians did not work merely out of the fear of their warder, they were doing their best only fearing God. As I will show later on, I had, however, to change this opinion considerably.

Next day also we were sent out, but not in charge of a white warder. A Kaffir was sent with us, though he was not the same as yesterday's. He had instructions not to trouble us.

We were asked to do as much as we could *bona fide* and conscientiously. The work was light also, we had to dig and fill up certain pits in municipal land, near the public road. This gave us short spells of rest. But I now learnt that, where God only was taken to be our witness, we avoided work, I saw many slackening in their work.

I am strongly of opinion that this dishonesty is disgraceful on our part, and the slackness of our fight is mainly due to it. But the road of passive resistance is both easy and difficult. Our motives should be pure. We have no enmity with the Government, and we should not consider it our foe.

We are fighting against Government simply to correct its mistakes. We do not wish it ill, we are rather of opinion that our fight is for Government's ultimate good. With this opinion, we are bound to do our best for the jail-work. If any one thinks that morally he is not bound to any such work, then he should not do anything even when the warder is superintending his work. He is, holding this opinion, bound to oppose, and if his opposition results in heavier punishment, he should be prepared to undergo it. But no Indians have faith in this doctrine of conscience. He who avoids work, does so out of mere idleness and of a desire to shirk work. This idleness and this shirking do not behove us Indians. It is our duty as conscientious objectors to do whatever work is assigned to us, irrespective of the warder being with us or not. If we did our duty properly, we would not have to encounter any trouble. Whatever we had to suffer in jail was due to the desire of some to avoid work.

This was a digression. Day by day thus our work became lighter. The batch to which I was assigned, was afterwards put on to keep the jail garden clean, to sow seeds therein, etc. Mainly we had to sow maize seeds, clear potato beds, and dust potato plants. For two days we were again taken to dig the Municipal Tank, where we had to stock the earth after digging and also to cast it away in

hand barrows It was hard work again, but I had to do it for two days only. My wrist then became swollen, and I cured it by applying some earth to it.

This place was at distance of 4 or 5 miles and so we were carried to the scene of our work in trolleys We had to cook our food by the pond, and had therefore to take raw food and fire-wood with us The contractor was not satisfied with this work of ours too, as we were not able to equal the Kaffirs So after testing our capacity on this work we were given another Till now almost all able-bodied Indians were taken together to the works, but from now they were divided into batches, one being sent to uproot the grass which had grown round the soldiers' tombs, another being sent to clean the cemetery, and so on This arrangement went on for some time In the meanwhile after Barberton's case, nearly fifty prisoners were discharged and the remaining were given work in the garden itself We had to dig, reap, and sweep it This cannot be called heavy work, it was rather healthy work No doubt the monotony of it working in the same way for nine hours on end was tiresome in the beginning, but afterwards we became used to it, and it did not appear so

Over and above this sort of labour, it was the duty of the inmates of the cells to remove their urinal buckets, etc , I saw my companions hesitating

to do this sort of work, but, really, there should have been no such hesitation of their part. It is a mistake to suppose that there is any disgrace in doing any honest work. Again those who have to go to jail, cannot afford to nurse such a feeling. I used to watch the question being raised many times as to who would remove the bucket. But, if we really understood the reason of our Passive Resistance, instead of this attitude of hesitation, one would have expected rivalry in the discharge of such duties, and he who was able to secure the work should have considered himself lucky and honoured. If we have girded up our loins to bear troubles, he who undergoes most misery should be most honoured. An admirable example of this was set by Mr Hasan Mirza. He was suffering from a very bad disease of the lungs. He was consequently of weak health, but still he gladly did whatever work fell to his lot and never cared for his health. He was once asked by a Kaffir Warder, to clean the privy of the Chief Warder. He instantly obeyed him, but as he had never done such dirty work in his life he instantly vomitted, but still he did not mind it and was going on with the cleaning of another privy, when I happened to go there, and was surprised to see him doing this uncleanly work. I felt great admiration for him, and on inquiry learnt about the first privy also. It seems once the same

Kaffir Warder was asked by his Chief to procure two Indians to clean the privies specially set apart for them. He came to me and asked for the man. I felt I was the best man for it, and so I went. I never feel any disgrace in doing such work, and I am of opinion that we should habituate ourselves to doing such things. It is because we turn up our noses at them, that we generally see the frontages of our houses and our privies in a dirty state, not only this, but we give rise to and spread such diseases as plague, etc. We have got a firm belief that privies should by nature remain dirty, and the result is that we are accused of being unclean and dirty. An Indian was once confined in a solitary cell for refusing to do this kind of work. It does not look proper on our part to object to doing this kind of work. When I prepared myself to go, the warder taxed others, and the story spread, which made Mr Umar Usman and Mr Rustamji hurry up to my assistance, although the work to be done was very light. The object of mentioning this incident is this, that they felt themselves honoured in doing the work if it was ordered by Government. If we are displeased at the work given to us, we are not fit to share in the struggle for conscience.

REMOVAL TO JOHNNESBERG

I have narrated above my experiences in the Volksrust Jail, but I did not complete my two months

there After a few days I was all on a sudden taken to Johnnesberg and the incidents there are also worth noting I was taken there on the 25th October, as I was cited as a witness in the case of Tailou Dahya My own inference was that there must have been other reasons too Those who were hopeful thought that perhaps I was called to visit Mr Smuts But they were disappointed in the end A warder was specially sent from Johnnesberg to remove me. Between him and me we were given a second class railway compartment, the reason being that there were no third class carriages in that train, otherwise it is usual to carry prisoners in third class My dress on the road was jail dress I was made to carry my own luggage and we had to go on foot from the jail to the Railway Station, and on reaching Johnnesberg I had also to go on foot from the station to the Jail carrying my luggage in the same way This gave rise to a deal of comment in the paper, and questions were asked in Parliament about it, and the feelings of many were hurt, because they all felt that a political prisoner like myself should not have been treated as a common convict, and made to walk on a public road in prison dress, carrying a head load of luggage

It is natural that people should be hurt at this treatment When Mr Angalia heard that I had to go in this way, tears came to his eyes Mr Naidu

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

and Mr Polak had come to know about it, and so they met me on the station and they too were on the point of weeping when they saw my condition I myself feel that there is no reason in this. In this country there is no possibility of the Government making any difference in the treatment of political and ordinary offenders The more the Government oppress us and the more we bear it, the earlier would our release come Again if one, deeply considers it, there is no harm in putting on jail clothes, going on foot and carrying one's luggage But the world is such that it takes such things to be disgraceful, and the uproar in England was due to this erroneous belief

On the way, the warder gave me no trouble, my firm determination was not to take any other food excepting jail food unless the warder publicly permitted me to do so On account of it, till now, I was subsisting on prison food But no food had been supplied to me for the Railway journey and the warder allowed me to buy whatever I liked, and the station master offered to give me money His feelings had been greatly moved, but I thanked him for his kindness and declined the loan I borrowed ten shillings from Mr Kaji who was at the station, and purchased food with it for myself and the warder from the station

It was evening when we reached Johnnesberg,

so I was not taken near the other Indian prisoners, but was given a bed in a room which contained mainly Kaffir prisoners. I passed a very oppressive and fearful night in this cell, I was afraid that I should be housed with these convicts all along, and this increased my fears, I did not know I should be separated from them in the morning. I felt greatly annoyed, still I said to myself that my duty lay in suffering whatever calamity that would come in my way. I read portions from the Bhagavad Gita, which I had with me. I read verses which were apposite to this occasion and they comforted my mind. The reason why I felt uneasy was that I saw that the Chinese and Kaffir prisoners were savage, murderous, and bestial. I did not know their language, and the Kaffirs began to question me. I felt they were mocking me, but as I understood nothing I did not reply. One of them then asked me in broken English, why I was brought there in that state. I gave him some sort of a reply and then kept silent. Then the Chinaman took his turn at it, and he was worse than his predecessor. He came near my bed and began to examine me, he then went to the place where the Kaffir was and they began to indulge in obscene jokes and became indecent, exposing their private parts. Both these men were convicted of murder and larceny. In this terrifying company, sleep was out of the question.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

Late at night I snatched a few moments' rest with the idea that I would complain of it to the governor in the morning

Real discomfort or unhappiness lies in this, and not in carrying luggage, etc. Other Indians must be undergoing such terrible experience too. I took comfort in the thought that if they suffered similarly I was sharing their distress. I also determined to fight with the Government strenuously to improve their jail administration and thought that all these would be so many indirect advantages accruing from passive resistance.

In the morning I was immediately taken to the place where the Indians were. So I had no occasion to speak about this to the governor, though I had made up my mind to fight against the rule by which Indians are made to live with Kaffirs and others. There were about fifteen Indians when I went there, comprising only three who were not there for passive resistance. These three were convicted of other offences, and they were kept with the Kaffirs. But when I went there, the chief warder ordered that we all should get a room to ourselves. To my regret I found that several Indians liked to be associated with Kaffirs, because thereby they could get secretly tobacco, etc. This was greatly to our shame. We should have no contempt or dislike for the natives, but it has never

to be forgotten that in general matters, there is nothing common between them and us, and again those who wanted to live with them wanted to do so for an improper object altogether, an object we should altogether relinquish

I underwent another uncomfortable experience in this jail. There are two divisions in this jail. In one are located Kaffirs and Indians with hard labour, and in the other are kept witness-prisoners, and also those committed to the civil jail. Convicts with hard labour are not entitled to go in there. We were given sleeping accomodation in this second division, but we had no right to use the privy, etc., thereof. In the first there is always such a large number of inmates, that there is great difficulty in the use of the latrines. To many Indians this was a calamity, and I also felt it so. The warder had told me that there was no objection to my using the privy of the second division, so I used it. But even there it was crowded. Again the privies are open, and doorless. Just as I was sitting down, a big, lusty, strong and savage-looking Kaffir came up and asked me to get away, using abusive language. I said I would just finish and get up. But before I could finish my sentence, he lifted me up in his arms and threw me out. By good luck, I caught hold of a doorpost and saved a fall. I was not afraid a bit at this. I laughed over the incident and went away.

But one or two Indian prisoners who saw this affair helplessly wept over it, because they were in jail and therefore unable to help me, they felt greatly. I afterwards learnt that many other Indians had to undergo a similar trouble. I spoke about this to the governor, and he too admitted the necessity of a separate privy accommodation for the Indians, and also the undesirability of keeping Indians and Kaffirs together. He, however, immediately ordered that a separate latrine should be forthwith sent from the larger jail for the Indians and from the next day our troubles on this score ended. I myself had to go four days without answering this necessary call and so I suffered in health.

During my stay in Johnnesberg I had to go to Court three or four times and I was allowed to see Mr Polak and my son there. Others also saw me at times. I was permitted by the Court to get food from home also, and so Mr Kellenback used to bring for me bread, cheese, etc.

During the time that I was there the number of passive resisters became greatly swollen. Once it went up to fifty. A large majority were asked to sit on a stone and break small pieces of stone with a little hammer. About ten men were engaged in mending torn clothes. I was asked to sew caps on a sewing machine. I learnt the use of the

machine here for the first time As it was not a difficult thing, I picked it up in no time

As the major part of the Indians were engaged in breaking stones I also asked to be put to that work But the warder said that the orders from his chief were that I should not be taken out and so I could not be put to that work One day it so happened that I had no machine for sewing work, so I began to read The rule is that every prisoner should do some sort of jail work , so seeing this, the warder asked me if I was not well. I said no , then the following talk took place.

Question Why are you doing no work?

Answer I have finished the work I had I do not wish to make a show of having work when there is none If you give me some other work, I am willing to do it But having none, I have begun to read What objection could there be to it?

Question It is true , but still would it not be much better if you are in the stores when the chief warder or governor comes?

A I am not willing to do so I am going to see the governor to tell him that there is not enough work for me in the stores and so I should be sent to break stones

Q Very well But I cannot send you there without orders

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

The governor came up shortly after and I spoke to him about the matter. He did not allow me to be put on the stone breaking work, he said there was no need to do so, as I was to be sent back to Volksrust the next day.

MEDICAL INSPECTION OF CONVICTS

The jail at Volkstrust is a small one and so naturally more conveniences are allowed there than at the larger one at Johnnesberg, e.g., Mr Daood Muhamad was allowed at Volksrust to use his shawl as his head-dress and the others were allowed the use of their trousers. Messrs Rustamji, Sorabji and Shapurji, were permitted to put on their own hats. This was impossible at Johnnesberg. Again, there, before admitting convicts, they are medically examined, to find out if they are suffering from any contagious disease, and if so, they are isolated and put under treatment. Some convicts might be found under medical treatment suffering from some such disease and so for this purpose all parts of the body are examined, and they are made stark naked. The Kaffirs, to save the Doctor's time, are made to stand undressed for nearly fifteen minutes, but the Indians are asked to strip themselves of their trousers, only when the Doctor

comes, before that, they have to take out only their upper garments. Almost all of them object to take out their trousers, still they suffer the indignity, on account of their fight for passive resistance. I spoke to the Doctor, and the only concession he made was that he examined *some* only in the privacy of the stores, but declined to extend it to *all*. The association has memorialised about this matter and it is still under consideration. It is proper to agitate against it, because this is an old ingrained habit of our people, but still if we just consider it from another point of view, it is not so objectionable. Why should we object to strip before males? Why should we assume that others would stare at our nakedness? There should be no false shame about us. If our minds are innocent, why should we specially hide what nature has given us? I know that to every Indian these statements would appear unusual, and absurd. Still to me it looks as if the matter were capable of a sane consideration. This sort of objection on our part damages our cause. Formerly the Doctor never examined the Indians. But once he asked two or three Indians. But he suspected them and on being examined, it was found out that they had told a lie. Since that time, he decided to examine all Indians properly. This one instance would show that we ourselves are instrumental in bringing troubles on our heads.

RETURN FROM JOHNNESBERG

As mentioned above I was taken back to Volksrust on 4th November. This time also I was in charge of a warder. I was in prison dress, but I was not made to walk this time but taken in a carriage to the station. The ticket provided was for a third, instead of a second class compartment. For my meals on the way I was given $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of bread and bull-beef, but I declined to take beef and left it there. En-route the warder permitted me to take other food. In the station I found some Indian tailors. They saw me, and as they could not talk to me and as they saw me in a convict's dress they were so affected that they wept at the sight. I could not comfort them even by saying that I was indifferent to the dress and that I felt nothing on account of it, so I silently watched the affecting scene. We two were given a compartment to ourselves. The next one was occupied by a tailor. He gave me some food. At Heidelberg Mr Somabhai saw me. He purchased some food from the station and gave it to me. The woman from whom he purchased it, first refused to accept any payment, to show her sympathy with our cause, but when Mr Somabhai insisted on her taking the same, she nominally accepted 6d only. He had also wired to Standerton, so there also some Indians had come

and brought food so that on the way the warden and myself had plenty to eat

On reaching Volksrust I saw Mr Nagdi and Mr Kaji on the Station They accompanied me on the road for some distance, as they were permitted to walk with me a little apart I had again to carry my luggage from the Station This again gave rise to comments in the press

All the Indians were glad to see me back in Volksrust I was confined for the night in the same room as Mr Dawood Mahamad Till late at night, we talked over our experiences

THE STATE OF THE INDIANS

When I returned I found the whole work of the Indians altered, instead of 30, there were 75 prisoners As there was no space in the building for that large number, about 8 tents had been pitched to accommodate them A special cooking range had been imported from Pretoria The Indian prisoners were allowed often to go for a bath to the river flowing near the jail They had therefore more the appearance of belonging to a soldiers' camp than to a prison house It was really a camp of fighters for passive resistance, and to me it did not matter whether the warders treated us well or ill On the whole, they were not bad men Mr

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

Dawood Mahamad had nick-named each of them. One was named "Oakly," another "Mafuto," and so on.

VISITORS

A good number of visitors were allowed to call on us at this jail. Mr. Kaji was always anxious to call. He also managed most ably the outside affairs of the prisoners, and made the utmost use of the opportunities for calling. Mr. Polak used to come almost every week on business, Messrs. Mahomed Ibrahim and Kharasani had also specially called in connection with the main lines of the contribution for the Congress. On the 1st day about 100 Indians must have seen the Natal Shethias, who were deluged with a rain of telegrams.

SOME THOUGHTS

Generally cleanliness is very well observed in jails, if it were not so, there would be a likelihood of diseases breaking out. But still there are certain defects in the system. The blankets given to the convicts always get interchanged, a blanket used by the dirtiest of Kaffirs comes back to a clean Indian. It is always full of vermin and stinking. The rule is that whenever there is sunshine it is to be exposed.

for half an hour every day, but the rule was never observed, and to us who were of cleanly habits, this was a great grievance

A similar inconvenience was felt as regards clothes. Dress put on by a particular convict was not washed after he was discharged, but in the same dirty state given over to his successor. I felt a shudder at this.

There was overcrowding too. In Johnnesberg where there was accommodation for 200 individuals 400 men were confined, so that twice its usual number was always interned in a cell, and at times they were insufficiently supplied with blankets. This was a great trouble, but as we were placed in this condition for no fault of ours, we managed to think of it cheerfully, and lived a pleasant life. Mr Dawood Mahammad not only passed his whole day cheerfully, but managed to put the other Indians in good humour by his jokes and laughter.

The only note of regret was struck in this jail life by the unwillingness of Indians to do their duty conscientiously. Once, when several Indians were sitting, a Kaffir warder happened to come to them and asked for two men to go and cut a little grass. Every one remained silent. Seeing this, Mr Imam Abdul Kader volunteered to go, but no one came forward to accompany him, on the other hand, they began to tell the warder that he was their Imam.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

(religious leader,) and should not be taken. This meant a double disgrace. Where it was the duty of every one to volunteer himself for the task it was shirked, and secondly, where out of patriotic motives, to save the honour of his countrymen, the Imam Saheb came forward, his status was exposed.

A SORE TRIAL

By the time half of my term was over, a wire was received from Phoenix to the effect that Mrs Gandhi was dangerously ill, and I should go to her. Every one was sorry to hear this. But I had absolutely no misgivings about what my duty was. The jailer asked me if I was ready to pay the fine and go. I at once said, it was not possible for me to pay the fine and get released, as it was a part of our programme in this fight that if necessary, we should suffer bereavement of our wife and children. He smiled at it, but he too, was sorry. To some, *prima facie*, this would strike to be cruel conduct on my part, but I think that there is nothing wrong in it. Love for my country, I consider to be part of my religion, though not the whole of it. Unless one has love for one's own country, one cannot be said to observe one's own religion perfectly. So, if in trying to observe our religion, we have to part from our wife and children, even lose them, there is

nothing heartless about it, but I rather feel convinced that it is our duty so to do. If we have to fight till death, we have to do so, and why should we think of other matters? Lord Roberts lost his only son, in a task inferior to ours, he was engaged in the war and could not be present at his burial even. Is not the history of the world full of such instances of heroic self--abnegation?

FIGHTS BETWEEN KAFFIRS

This prison contained several Kaffir murderers. They were constantly quarrelling amongst themselves after being placed in the cells. Sometimes they attacked their warders even, who were twice beaten. It is obvious therefore that there is great risk in keeping Indians with them. The risk has not yet been realised as a fact, but as long as the law places them both on the same level, the danger is ever present.

ILLNESS

There was no special illness in the jail. I have already spoken of that of Mr Mavji. A Tamil gentleman, Mr Raju, contracted dysentery, and his health was considerably affected. The reason he gave was that he was used to taking thirty cups of

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

tea daily, and he was deprived of the same in the jail. He asked for tea, but that could not be given, still the Doctor gave him some medicine and two pounds of milk and bread. This cured him. Mr Ravi Krishna Talevant Singh suffered till the last, along with Mr Kap and Mr Bavazir, Mr Ratnasi Sodha used to take his meal once only in the day as he was keeping fast on account of the *Chatur mas Vrata* (a religious observance, during which Hindus take one meal only for a period of four months in the monsoon). As the food did not suit him, he suffered from inflammation. Besides this, there were other miscellaneous complaints, but still on the whole I could see that even the sick Indians did not give in. They were ready to undergo these troubles for their country.

SOME INCONVENIENCES

I marked this also that some of our internal troubles were more painful than the external ones. At times I could see a faint echo of the differences between one being a Hindu and another a Moham-medan, between one belonging to the upper and another to the lower classes. As Indians of all kinds and classes were made to live together in the jail, I could very easily see how and why we were unfit for Self-Government. Still as we were able to

negotiate all such difficulties in the end successfully I also felt that it was not impossible, if there was the occasion, to govern ourselves, successfully too

Some Hindus said that they would not eat food cooked by Mohammedans or persons of other castes. My opinion is that men with such restrictions should never move out of India. These very objectors had no objection to a Kaffir or a white touching their grain, but once one of them said that the other was a *Dhed*, he would not sleep near him. This was not proper, and on inquiry I learnt that he personally had no objection to sleeping in this way, but he was afraid of being placed out of his caste if his caste men in his native place came to learn it! My own idea is that we have embraced untruth and left off truth, by this show of superiority and inferiority, and by the fear of caste. If we know it as a fact, that to despise a *Dhed* because he is a *Dhed* is not proper, what right have we to pass ourselves off as conscientious objectors or passive resisters, if we leave off the path of truth for fear of caste or some such dread? I therefore wish, that those who have joined me in this fight, should fight against their caste, against their families, and against everything wherein they see untruth and irreligion. As they are backward in such fights they are backward in this fight too. How would it be possible for us to ask successfully for rights of equality, if we, amongst

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

ourselves, stick to such false distinctions or be carried away by the dread of what we consider right-conduct, coming to be known in our native place as some thing against caste rules? To give us a cause out of fear is cowardly and if Indians are cowardly, they will not be able to stand up till the end, in their struggle against Government

WHO CAN GO TO JAIL?

From the above it will be seen that those who are addicted to bad habits (smoking, etc ,) those who stick to false distinctions of caste, those who are quarrelsome, those who see difference between a Hindu and a Mohammedan, and those who are ill, are not proper persons to go to jail, or having gone likely to remain there long. Those who consider it a distinction to go to prison out of patriotism should be sound in body, mind and soul. A sick man might give in, in the long run and others such as those who are in the habit of being mad after tea, tobacco, etc , cannot fight till the last

MY STUDIES

Although I had to work the whole day, I could spare some time in the mornings and evenings and on Sundays, to read, and as there were no distractions in the jail, I was able to read peacefully. Although the time at my disposal was not much, I read the two famous books of Ruskin, *Essays of*

Toreau, some part of the Bible, Life of Garibaldi, (Gujerati), Essays of Bacon (Gujerati), and two other books in English relating to India. From Thoreau and Ruskin I could find out arguments in favour of our fight. Mr. Devari had sent the Gujarati books for the use of us all. In addition, I almost always read the Bhagavad Gita, and the result of this study was that my mind became more than ever confirmed in this fight for conscience, and make me say emphatically to-day that I saw nothing in prison to make me afraid or tired of it.

THE RESULTANT

Two ideas should be the result of these notes. The first would be why should we undergo all this trouble, to put on thick, dirty and evil smelling dress, to eat indifferent food, sometimes starve even, to be kicked by warders, to consort with Kaffirs, to labour at a work which might be to our liking or not, slave under a warder who is fit to be our slave to be cut off from the visits of all our friends, and, even from writing to them, to be deprived of necessities, and to sleep with murderers and thieves? Is not death preferable? Is it not better to pay the fine than go to jail? A man who is influenced by this idea, becomes weak in purpose, is rather afraid of the prison, and is stopped from doing that good to the cause which has to be done by going to jail.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

The other idea is that we should consider' it our good luck if we are sent to jail for the good of our country, for preserving our honour, for observing our religion. We should think there is no hardship there. Have we not to obey many outside, while, why, inside it, we have to obey only the warder? What anxiety is there then in the jail? None, for earning, nor for eating. Others regularly cook the food and give it to us. Government takes care of our health, and all this *gratis*. We get work enough to give us good exercise, we have to give up our bad habits of smoking, etc., our minds are easy and we get plenty of opportunities to pray to God. If our bodies are in bondage our minds are free. Our bodies are taken care of by those who imprison us. Thus in every way, we are free. No doubt sometimes we encounter troubles. A wicked warder perchance assaults us, but does not that teach us to cultivate patience? These considerations make the prison house, a holy and a happy place. It is in our own hands to make it a happy or unhappy place. In short, happiness and unhappiness are mere creations of the mind. I trust that on a perusal of these experiences of mine, the reader would come to only one conclusion, *viz*, that there is nothing but happiness in going to jail, bearing troubles, and undergoing other hardships for one's own country or religion.

THIRD EXPERIENCE

VOLKSRUST

When on the 25th February I got three months' hard labour, and once again embraced my brother Indians and my son in Volksrust Jail I little thought that I should have had to say much in connection with my third "pilgrimage" to the jail, but with many other human assumptions, this too proved to be false. My experience this time was unique. What I learnt therefrom I could not have learnt after years of study, I consider these three months invaluable. I saw many vivid pictures of passive resistance, and I have become, therefore, a more confirmed resister than what I was three months ago. For all this, I have to thank the Government of this place (the Transvaal).

Several officers had betted this time that I should not get less than six months. My friends old and renowned Indians my own son had got six months and so I too was wishing that they might win their bets. Still I had my own misgivings, and they proved true. I got only three months, that being the maximum under the law.

After going there, I was glad to meet Messrs,

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

Dawood Muhammed, Rustamji, Sorabji, Pillay, Hajurasing, Lal Bahadur Sing and other "fighters" Excepting for about ten all others were accommodated in tents, pitched in the jail compound for sleeping, and the scene resembled a camp more than a prison. Every one liked to sleep in the tents.

We were comfortable about our meals. We used to cook ourselves as before, and so could cook as we liked. We were about 77 passive resisters in all.

Those who were taken out for work had rather a hard time of it. The Road near the Magistrate's Court had to be built so they had to dig up stones, etc., and carry them. After that was finished they were asked to dig up grass from the School Compound. But mostly they did their work cheerfully. For three days I was also thus sent out with the "shans" (gangs) to work, but in the meanwhile a wire was received that I was not to be taken outside to work. I was disheartened at this, as I liked to move out, because it improved my health and exercised my body. Generally I like two meals a day, but in the Volksrust Jail, on account of this exercise I felt hungry thrice. After this turn, I was given the work of a sweeper, but this was useless, and after a time even that was taken away.

WHY I WAS MADE TO LEAVE VOLKSRUST

On the 2nd of March I heard that I was ordered to be sent to Pretoria. I was asked to be ready at once, and my warder and I had to go to the station in pelting rain, walking on hard roads, with my luggage on my head. We left by the evening train in a third class carriage.

My removal gave rise to various surmises. Some thought that peace was near, others, that after separating me from my companions Government intended to oppress me more and some others, that in order to stifle discussion in the House of Commons it might be intended to give me greater liberty and convenience.

I did not like to leave Volksrust, as we passed our days and nights pleasantly there talking to one another. Messrs Hajura Singh and Joshi always put us questions, questions which were neither useless nor trivial, as they related to science and philosophy. How would one like leave such company and such a camp?

But everything cannot happen as we wish. I left the place quietly. Saluting Mr Kaji on the road, the warder and I got confined in a compartment. It was very cold, and raining too for the whole night. I had my overcoat with me which I was permitted to use. I was given bread and cheese

for my meals on the way, but as I had eaten before I left, I gave them to my warder

PRETORIA JAIL THE BEGINNING

We reached Pretoria on the 3rd, and found everything new. This jail was newly built, and the men were new. I was asked to eat but I had no inclination to do so. Mealie meat porridge was placed before me. I tasted a spoonful only and then left it untouched. My warder was surprised at it, but I told him I was not hungry, and he smiled. Then I was handed over to another warder. He said, "Gandhi, take off your cap." I did so. Then asked "Are you the son of Gandhi?" I said, "No, my son is undergoing six months' imprisonment at Volksrust." He then confined me in a cell. I began to walk forwards and backwards in it. He saw it from the watch-hole in the door, and exclaimed, "Gandhi, don't walk about like that. It spoils my floor." I stopped, and stood in a corner quietly. I had nothing to read even, as I had not yet got my books. I was confined at about eight, and at ten was taken to the Doctor. He only asked me if I had any contagious disease, and then allowed me to go. I was then interned in a small room at eleven where I passed my whole time. It seemed to be a cell made for one prisoner only. Its dimen-

sions were about 10 into 7 feet. The floor was of black pitch, which the warder tried to keep shining. There was only one small glass window, with iron bars, for light and air. There was electric light kept to examine the inmates at night. It was not meant for the use of the prisoners, as it was not strong enough to enable one to read. When I went and stood very near it, I could read only a large-type book. It is put out at eight, but is again put on five or six times during the night, to enable the warders to look at the prisoners through the watch-hole.

After eleven the Deputy Governor came and I made these requests to him: for my books, for permission to write a letter to my wife who was ill, and for a small bench to sit on. For the first, he said, he would consider, for the second, I might write, and for the third, no. Afterwards I wrote out my letter in Gujarati and gave it to be posted. He endorsed on it, that I should write it in English. I said, my wife, did not know English, and my letters were a great source of comfort to her, and that I had nothing special to write in them. Still I did not get the permission, and I declined to write in English. My books were given to me in the evening.

My midday meal I had to take standing in my cell with closed doors. At three, I asked leave for

a bath The warder said, "All right but you had better go there after undressing yourself" The place was 125 feet distant from my cell, I said if there was no special object in my doing so, I would put my clothes on the curtain there and take my bath He allowed it, but said, "Do not delay." Even before I had cleaned my body, he shouted out, "Gandhi have you done?" I said, "I would do so in a minute" I could rarely see the face of an Indian In the evening I got a blanket and a half and a corr mat to sleep on but neither pillow nor plank Even when answering a call of nature I was being watched by a warder If he did not happen to know me, he would cry out, "Sam, come out" But Sam had got the bad habit of taking his full time in such a condition, so how could he get up at once? If he were to do so, he would not be easy Sometimes the warders and sometimes the Kaffirs would peep in, and at times would sing out, "get up, get up" The labour given to me next day was to polish the floor and the doors The latter were of varnished iron, and what polish could be brought on them by rubbing? I spent three hours on each door, rubbing, but found them unchanged the same as before The floor dirt showed signs of a little change There were Kaffirs working with me and they used to tell me the stories of their crime in broken English, and in return asked me

my crime. Some asked me if I was in for theft, and others, for selling wine. When I explained the facts to one of them, capable of understanding the situation a little, he said, "Quite right, you did well, Amluqu bad (i.e., the whites are bad). Don't pay, fine." My cell was inscribed "Isolated," and it had five such other cells adjoining. My neighbour was a Kaffir undergoing punishment for attempted murder and there were three others, who were convicted of committing unnatural offences. It was in the company of such people and under such conditions for the third time I was in Jail.

FOOD

The food was in keeping with the above conditions. In the morning, and at noon, for three days, pap and potatoes, or carrots, and three days beans, in the evening, rice without ghee, on Wednesdays at noon, beans and rice with ghee, and on Sundays, pap, with rice and ghee, were supplied. With difficulty could I partake of rice without ghee, so I decided not to eat rice till I got ghee. The morning and midday allowance of pap was at times uncooked and at times like a liquid. Beans also were at times raw, though generally well cooked. Whenever vegetables were given they consisted of four small potatoes, and they were counted

as 8 oz , and on carrot days, only three small carrots were given Some times in the morning I used to eat four or five spoonfuls of pap, but practically speaking for a month and a half I lived only on my midday meal My brethren at the Volksrust jail have to learn this lesson from my experience, that there, where they were their own cooks, if they lost temper when something was ill or partially cooked, it was all right, but what would they have done here? They could have lost their temper here too, but I think the anger would have been ill-placed When hundreds of prisoners live contentedly on such a food, what grievance could be made thereof? There could only be one object in making a complaint, *viz* , that by its redress others might benefit too When at times I complained to the warder that the potatoes were few, he would bring me more but of what good was that? I once saw him taking the same from the plates of another prisoner and thus depriving him of his share, and from that time, I gave up complaining

I knew that no ghee was given with rice in the evening and I had thought of remedying the defect I spoke to the Chief Warder, but he said, ghee was to be given only on Wednesdays and Sunday noons in place of meat, and if its further supply were needed, I should see the Doctor Next day I applied to see him and I was taken to him

I requested him to order out for all Indians ghee in place of fat. The Chief warder was present and he added that Gandhi's request was not proper. He said that till then many Indians had used both fat and meat, and those who objected to fat, were given dry rice, which they ate without any objection, the passive resisters had also done so, and when they were released, they left with added weight. The Doctor asked me what I had to say to that. I replied that I could not quite swallow the story, but speaking for myself, I should spoil my health, if I were compelled to take rice without ghee. Then he said, "for you specially, I would order bread to be given." I said, "thank you, but I had not applied for myself alone, and I would not be able to take bread for myself alone, till ghee was ordered to be given to all the others." The Doctor said, "Then you should not find fault with me now."

What was to be done now? If the Chief Warder had not come in my way, the desired order would have been obtained. On the very day, bread and rice were put before me. I was hungry, but how could I calling myself a passive resister accept bread under these circumstances? So I declined both. Next day I obtained permission to apply to the Chief Director and I got it. In my petition I gave instances of the Johnnsberg and Volksrust

prisons, and requested ghee to be given to all. A fortnight later a reply was received to the effect that till the quality of the food to be given to the Indians was settled, I was to be supplied with ghee along with rice. I did not know of this reservation, so on the first day I gladly took rice, ghee and bread. But this gladness of mine lasted for a day only. Next day I came to know of the reservation, and so I rejected the articles, and gave the Chief Warder to understand that I could not be justified in using them till all Indians were not given ghee. The Deputy Governor, who was near, said, that I should do as I pleased.

I again petitioned and I came to learn that the food regulations would ultimately be made as in Natal. I criticised that also, and gave the reasons why I could not for myself alone accept ghee. At last, when in all, about a month and a half had elapsed, I got a reply stating that wherever there were many Indian prisoners, ghee would invariably be given. Thus it might be said that after a month and a half I broke my fast, and for the last month I was able to take rice, ghee and bread. But I took no breakfast, and at noon, when pap was doled out, I hardly took ten spoonfuls, as every day it was differently prepared. But still I got good nourishment from the bread and rice, and so my health improved. I say so, because when I used to

eat once only, it had broken down, I had lost all strength, and for ten days I was suffering from a severe ache in one side of my forehead. My chest too showed symptoms of being affected.

CHANGE OF WORK

There was a reason for this. I was first asked to clean doors and floors. I did it for ten days. Then I was given the work of sewing (two) tattered blankets into one. This was a taxing work, because I had to sit on the floor in a bending position the whole day to do it, and that too inside the cell. So that at the end of the day my waist began to ache, and my eyes were injured too. The air of the room was bad of course. I requested the Chief Warder once or twice to send me on out-door work for digging, etc., or in the alternative to allow me to sew the blankets in the open. He refused. I wrote to the Director about it, and ultimately the Doctor ordered that I should be allowed to do the work in the open air. I believe if I had not got this permission my health would have been more affected. I had some difficulty in getting this order even, but it is no use describing the same. The upshot of my agitation was that my diet was changed and I was allowed to work in the open. Thus I secured a double advantage. When this blanket work was

first given, it was thought that each of them would take up a week in sewing and weaving, and I should have to pass my whole term in doing so, but instead of that, after finishing the first one, I was able to turn out one pair in two days, and other work had to be found for me, such as putting on warm wool to guernsey frocks, sewing on ticket pockets, etc

I had told many passive resisters that if they left the jail with spoiled health, they would be considered wanting in the right spirit. We should turn our prisons into happy palaces, so that when I found my own health getting ruined I felt apprehensions lest I should have to go out for that reason. It has to be remembered that I had not availed myself of the order for ghee made in my favour, so that there was a chance of my health getting affected, but this does not apply in the case of others, as it is open to each individual prisoner, when he is in jail, to have some special order made in his favour and thus preserve his health.

OTHER CHANGES

I have said that my warder was harsh in his dealings with me. But this did not last long. When he saw that I was fighting with the Government about food etc., but obeying his orders unreservedly, he changed his conduct, and allowed me

to do as I liked. This removed my difficulties about bath, latrine etc. He became so considerate that he scarce allowed it to be seen that he ordered me to do anything. The man who succeeded him was very good and was always anxious to work after my conveniences. He said, "I love those who fight for their community, I myself am such a fighter, and I do not consider you to be a convict." He thus used to comfort me.

Again some days after, I was taken out for half an hour, morning and evening, to walk about in the area. I was allowed to continue this exercise even after I was permitted to sit in the open for work. This rule applied to all who have to squat and do their work.

Again, the bench which was refused in the beginning was sent to me, by the Chief Warder himself, after some days. In the meanwhile I had received two religious books for reading from General Smuts. From this I concluded that the hardships I had to undergo were due not to his express orders, but to the carelessness and indifference of himself and others, and also because the Indians were considered to be like Kaffirs. The only object of isolating me, appeared to be to prevent my talking with others. After some trouble I got permission for the use of a note book and pencil.

THE VISIT OF THE DIRECTOR

Before I was taken to Pretoria, Mr. Lichenstein had seen me with special permission. He had to see me on office business, but he asked me how I was, etc., I was not willing to answer him on the point, but he pressed me. So I said, "I will not tell you all, but I will say this much, that they treat me cruelly. General Smuts hopes by this means he will make me give in, but that will never be, as I am prepared to undergo whatever befalls me, my mind is at peace. But you should publish this. After coming out, I myself will do so." He communicated it to Mr. Polak, who not being able to keep it to himself in his turn spoke to others, and Mr. David Polak thereupon wrote to Lord Selborne and an inquiry was held. The Warder came for that purpose, and I spoke to him the very words set out above. I also pointed out the defects, which I have mentioned in the beginning. Thereupon, after ten days he sent me a plank for bed, a pillow, a night shirt and a handkerchief which I took. In my memorial I had asked him to provide this convenience for all Indians. Really speaking, in this respect Indians are softer than the whites, and they cannot do without pillows. But the difficulties did not end here. The plank was swarming with bugs, so I did not use it for ten days. At last the Chief

Warder got it repaired, when I began to use it. In the meanwhile, as I had accustomed myself to sleep on the floor with my blanket spread on it, I did not feel the plank to be of much use. In the absence of the pillow I was using my books as a substitute, so there too I did not find myself better off.

HANDCUFFS

The opinion I had come to, in consequence of my treatment in jail in the beginning, was confirmed by what happened now. About four days after, I received a witness-summons in Mrs. Pillay's case. So I was taken to court. I was manacled this time. The Chief Warder had seen me and from him I had obtained leave to carry a book with me. He seemed to be under the impression that I was ashamed of the manacles, and so I had asked permission to carry a book, and hence he asked me to hold the book in my hands in such a way as to conceal the handcuffs. This made me smile, as I was feeling honoured in thus being manacled. The books that I was carrying was called "The Court of God is in Their Mind". I thought this a happy coincidence. What hardships could trouble me externally, if I were such as to make God live in my heart? I was thus taken on foot, handcuffed, to court. On my return I was brought back in the

jail-van The Indians must have known of my coming, as I saw some standing near the Court Mr. Trimbaklal Vyas could see me, specially through Mrs Pillay's Vakil

I was once again taken to court, manacled as before, but not on foot, but in the van

LESSONS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

Some of the above details might be considered trivial, but my main object in setting them out has been that to minor as well as to important matters you can apply the principles of resistance I calmly acquiesced in all the bodily suffering imposed on me by the warder, with the result that, not only was I able to remain calm and quiet, but he himself had to remove them in the end If I had opposed him, my strength of mind would have become weakened, and I could not have done the more important things that I had to do, and in the bargain would have made him my enemy

My food difficulty also was solved at last because I resisted passively, and underwent suffering in the beginning

The greatest good I derived from the sufferings was that by undergoing bodily hardships, I could see my mental strength clearly increasing, and it is even now maintained The experience of the last

Warder got it repaired, when I began to use it. In the meanwhile, as I had accustomed myself to sleep on the floor with my blanket spread on it, I did not feel the plank to be of much use. In the absence of the pillow I was using my books as a substitute, so there too I did not find myself better off.

HANDCUFFS

The opinion I had come to, in consequence of my treatment in jail in the beginning, was confirmed by what happened now. About four days after, I received a witness-summons in Mrs Pillay's case. So I was taken to court. I was manacled this time. The Chief Warder had seen me and from him I had obtained leave to carry a book with me. He seemed to be under the impression that I was ashamed of the manacles, and so I had asked permission to carry a book, and hence he asked me to hold the book in my hands in such a way as to conceal the handcuffs. This made me smile, as I was feeling honoured in thus being manacled. The books that I was carrying was called "The Court of God is in Their Mind". I thought this a happy coincidence. What hardships could trouble me externally, if I were such as to make God live in my heart? I was thus taken on foot, handcuffed, to court. On my return I was brought back in the

jail-van The Indians must have known of my coming, as I saw some standing near the Court Mr. Trimbaklal Vyas could see me, specially through Mrs Pillay's Vakil

I was once again taken to court, manacled as before, but not on foot, but in the van

LESSONS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

Some of the above details might be considered trivial, but my main object in setting them out has been that to minor as well as to important matters you can apply the principles of resistance I calmly acquiesced in all the bodily suffering imposed on me by the warder, with the result that, not only was I able to remain calm and quiet, but he himself had to remove them in the end If I had opposed him, my strength of mind would have become weakened, and I could not have done the more important things that I had to do, and in the bargain would have made him my enemy

My food difficulty also was solved at last because I resisted passively, and underwent suffering in the beginning

The greatest good I derived from the sufferings was that by undergoing bodily hardships, I could see my mental strength clearly increasing, and it is even now maintained The experience of the last

three months has left me more than ever prepared to undergo all such hardships with ease I feel that God helps such conscientious objectors and in putting them to the test, he only burdens them with such sufferings as they can bear, and in the end strengthens them.

WHAT I READ

The tale of my happiness or unhappiness is now at an end Amongst the many benefits I received in these three months, one was the opportunity I got to read At the start, I must admit, I fell into moods of despondency and thoughtfulness while reading and was even tired of these hardships, and my mind played antics like a monkey Such a state of mind leads many towards lunacy, but in my case, books saved me I made up in a large measure, for the loss of the society of my Indian brethren I always got about three hours to read We got an hour in the morning for meals, but as I used to take no food, I could devote that hour to reading, I did the same in the evening, and at noon, I read, while eating Again on those evenings on which I did not feel tired I used to read after lamp-light On Saturdays and Sundays I got plenty of time So that I was able to go through about thirty books, which comprised, English, Hindi, Gujarati, Sanskrit and

Tamil works Out of these I consider Tolstoy's, Emerson's and Carlyle's worth mentioning The two former related to religion I had borrowed the Bible from the Jail Tolstoy's books, are so simple and easy that any man can study and profit by them Again, he is a man who practises what he preaches and hence his writings inspire great confidence

Carlyle's French Revolution is written in a very effective style It made me think that from the White Nations we could hardly learn the remedy to remove the present miseries of India, because I am of opinion that the French people have secured no special benefits by their Revolution This was what Mazzani thought too There is a great conflict of opinion about this, which it is hardly possible to mention here Even there I saw some instances of passive resistance

The Swamiji had sent me Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit books Bhat Keshavram, had sent *Veda saptasanjan* and Mr Motilal Devan, the Upanishads. I also read the Manusmriti, the Ramayanasar, published in Phoenix, the *Patanjal Yog Darshna*, the *Ahnik Prakash* of Nathuramji, the *Sandhya Gutika* given by Professor Parmanand, the Bhagvad Gita, and the works of the late Kavi Shri Rajchandra This gave me much food for thought The Upanishads produced in me great peacefulness.

One sentence especially has struck to me It means, "whatever thou dost, thou shouldst do the same for the good of the soul " The words are of great importance and deserve deep thought.

But I derived the greatest satisfaction from the writings of Kavi Shri Rajchandra In my opinion they are such as should attract universal belief and popularity His life was as exemplary and high as Tolstoy's I had learnt some passages from them and from the Sandhya book by heart, and repeated them at night while lying awake Every morning also for half an hour I used to think over them, and repeat what I had learn by heart. This kept my mind in a state of cheerfulness, night and day. If disappointment or despair attacked me at times, I would think over what I had read, and my heart would instantly become gladdened, and thank God I will not weary the readers with any further observation on this point I would only say, that in this world, good books make up for the absence of good companions, so that all Indians, if they want to live happily in jail, should accustom themselves to reading good books

MY TAMIL STUDIES

What the Tamils have done in the struggle no other Indian community has done So I thought

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

that if for no other reason than to show my sincere gratefulness to them, I should seriously read their books. So I spent the last month in attentively studying their language. The more I studied the more I felt its beauties. It is an interesting and sweet language, and from what I read, I saw that the Tamils had in their midst, in the past and even now, many intelligent, clever and wise persons. Again, if there is to be one Nation in India, those who live outside the Madras Presidency, must know Tamil.

THE END

I wish that the result of the perusal of these experiences would be that he who knows not what patriotism is, would learn it, and after doing so, become a passive resister, and he who is so already, would be confirmed in his attitude. I also get more and more convinced that he who does not know what patriotism or feeling for one's own country is does not know his true duty or religion.

I trust that on a perusal of these experiences of mine, the reader would come to only one conclusion, viz , that there in nothing but happiness is going to Jail, bearing troubles, and undergoing other hardships for ones own country or religion

M K G.

MAHATMA'S
INDIAN JAIL EXPERIENCES

MY JAIL EXPERIENCES

The reader knows that I am a hardened criminal. It was not for the first time that I found myself a prisoner in the March of 1922. I had three previous South African convictions to my credit, and as I was regarded at the time by the South African Government as a dangerous criminal, I was moved from jail to jail and was able, therefore, to gather much experience of jail life. I had, before the Indian conviction, passed through six prisons and had come in touch with as many Superintendents and many more jailors. When, therefore during the beautiful night of the 10th of March I was taken to the Sabarmati Jail together with Mr Banker, I did not feel any awkwardness which always attends upon a strange and new experience. I almost felt I was going from one home to another in order to make more conquests of love. The preliminaries were more like being taken to a pleasure-trip than to jail. The courteous Superintendent of Police, Mr Healy, would not even enter the Ashram but sent Anasuyabai, with a message that he had a warrant for my arrest and that a car awaited me at the Ashram gate. I was to take whatever time I needed for getting ready. Mr.

Banker, who was on his way back to Ahmedabad, was met by Mr Healy on the way and already arrested. I was not at all unprepared for the news that Anasuyabai brought. As a matter of fact, after having waited long enough for the coming of the warrant which everybody thought was imminent, I had given instructions that all should retire and I was myself about to lay myself to bed. I had returned that evening from Ajmere after a fatiguing journey where most reliable information was given to me that a warrant had been sent to Ajmere for my arrest but the authorities would not execute the warrant, as the very day that the warrant reached Ajmere, I was going back to Ahmedabad. The real news of the warrant therefore came as a welcome relief. I took with me an extra kuchh (loincloth), two blankets, and five books, Bhagavad Gita, Ashram Hymn Book, Ramayan, Rodwell's translation of the Koran, a presentation copy of the Sermon on the Mount sent by schoolboys of a High School in California with the hope that I would always carry it with me. The Superintendent, Khan Bahadur N R Wacha received us kindly, and we were taken to a separate block of cells situated in a spacious, clean compound. We were permitted to sleep on the verandah of the cells, a rare privilege for prisoners. I enjoyed the quiet and the utter silence of the place. The next morning we

were taken to the Court for preliminary examination. Both Mr Banker and I had decided not only not to offer any defence but in no way to hamper the prosecution, but rather to help it. The preliminary examination was, therefore, quickly over. The case was committed to the Sessions, and as we were prepared to accept short service the trial was to take place on the 18th of March. The people of Ahmedabad had risen to the occasion. Mr Vallabh-bhai Patel had issued strict instructions that there should be no crowds gathering near the Court-house and that there should be no demonstration of any kind whatsoever. There were, therefore, in the Court-house only a select body of visitors, and the Police had an easy time of it, which I could see was duly appreciated by the authorities.

The week before the trial was passed in receiving visitors who were generally permitted to see us without restriction. We were allowed to carry on correspondence so long as it was harmless and submitted to the Superintendent. As we willingly carried out all the Jail regulations, our relations with the Jail officials were smooth and even cordial during the week that we were in Sabarmati. Khan Bahadur Wacha was all attention and politeness, but it was impossible not to notice his timidity in everything he did. He seemed to apologize for his Indian birth and unconsciously to convey that he

would have done more for us had he been a European. Being an Indian, even in allowing facilities which the regulations permitted, he was afraid of the Collector and the Inspector-General of Prisons and every official who was at all superior to him. He knew that if it came to a struggle between himself and the Collector or the Inspector-General of Prisons, he had nobody to back him up at the Secretariat. The notion of inferiority haunted him at every step. What was true outside was equally true, if not truer, inside the jail. An Indian official would not assert himself, not because he could not, but because he lived in mortal fear of degradation, if not dismissal. If he was to retain his post and obtain promotion, he must please his superiors even to the point of cringing and even at the sacrifice of principles. The contrast became terrible when we were transferred to Yerawada. The European Superintendent had no fear of the Inspector General of Prisons. He could claim just as much influence at the Secretariat as the latter. The Collector for him was almost an interloper. His Indian superiors he held cheap and therefore he was not afraid to do his duty when he wished and was equally unafraid to neglect it, when discharge of duty was an onerous task. He knew that, as a rule, he was always safe. This sense of safety enables young European officers often to do the right thing in spite of opposition.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

either from the public or from the Government, and he has also often driven coach and six through all regulations, all instructions and defied public opinion

Of the trial and the sentence I need say nothing as the reader knows all about it, except to acknowledge the courtesy which was extended to us by all the officials including the judge and the Advocate General. The wonderful restraint that was observed by the small crowd of people that was seen in and about the Court, and the great affection showed by them can never be effaced from memory. The sentence of six year's simple imprisonment I regarded as light. For, if Section 124 A of the Penal Code did really constitute a crime and the Judge administering the laws of the land could not but hold it as a crime, he would be perfectly justified in imposing the highest penalty. The crime was repeatedly and wilfully committed, and I can only account for the lightness of the sentence by supposing not that the Judge took pity on me, for I asked for none, but that he could not have approved of Section 124 A. There are many instances of judges having signified their disapproval of particular laws by imposing the minimum sentence, even though the crime denoted by them might have been fully and deliberately committed. He could not very well impose a lighter sentence seeing that the late

Lokamanya was sentenced to six year's imprisonment for a similar offence

The sentence over, we were both taken back to the prison, this time as fully convicted prisoners, but there was no change in the treatment accorded to us. Some friends were even permitted to accompany us. Leave-taking in the Jail was quite jovial. Mrs. Gandhi and Anasuyabai bore themselves bravely as they parted. Mr. Banker was laughing all the time and I heaved a sigh of relief thanking God that all was over so peacefully and that I would be able to have some rest and still feel that I was serving the country, if possible more than when I was travelling up and down addressing huge audiences. I wish I could convince the workers that imprisonment of a comrade does not mean so much loss of work for a common cause. If we believe, as we have so often proclaimed we do, that unprovoked suffering is the surest way of remedying a wrong in regard to which the suffering is gone through, surely it follows as a matter of course that imprisonment of a comrade is no loss. Silent suffering undergone with dignity and humility speaks with an unrivalled eloquence. It is solid work because there is no ostentation about it. It is always true because there is no danger of miscalculation. Moreover if we are true workers the loss of a fellow worker increases our zest and there-

fore capacity for work And so long as we regard anybody as irreplaceable, we have not fitted ourselves for organised work For organised work means capacity for carrying it on in spite of depletion in the ranks Therefore we must rejoice in the unmerited suffering of friends or ourselves and trust that the cause if it is just will prosper through such suffering

SOME OFFICIALS

It was on Saturday the 18th March that the trial was finished We were looking forward to a quiet time in the Sabarmati gaol at least for some weeks We had expected that the Government would not let us remain in that gaol for any length of time We were however not prepared for the very sudden removal that actually did take place For the reader may recall that we were removed on Monday the 20th March to a special train which was to take us to the Yerawads Central Jail We were made aware of the proposed removal only about an hour before departure The officer in charge was all politeness and we were enable to feel perfectly comfortable in the journey But immediately on alighting at Kirkee we observed the the difference and were made to feel that we were prisoners after all The Collector and two others

were awaiting the train. We were put in a motor prison-van which had perforations for ventilators. But for its hideous appearance it could well be a *pardah* motor. Certainly we could see nothing of the outside world. For the story of our reception at the gaol, the tearing away of Mr Banker from me, his restoration, the first interview, and kindred interesting details, I must refer the reader to my letter to Hakimji Ajmalkhan Saheb, already published in these columns. After the first unpleasantness the relations between the then Superintendent Col Dalziel and ourselves rapidly improved. He was most considerate regarding our creature comforts. But there was a certain something about him which always jarred. He would never forget that he was Superintendent and we were prisoners. He would not let it be granted that we were fully aware that we were prisoners and he was Superintendent. I made bold to say that we never once forgot and we were prisoners. We showed him all the deference due to his rank. The reminders were so unnecessary. But he had the needlessly haughty demeanour which one often regretfully notices about so many British officials. This weakness of him made him distrustful of the prisoners. Let me give a pleasant illustration of what I mean. He was most anxious that I should eat more than I was taking. He wanted me to take butter. I told him I could

take only goat's milk butter. He gave special orders that it should be procured at once. Well, it came. The difficulty was what to mix it with. I suggested that some flour might be issued to me. It was given. But it was too coarse for my very delicate digestive apparatus. Refined mill flour was ordered and 20 lbs. was issued to me. What was I to do with all this? I cooked or Mr. Banker cooked for me chapatis. After some trial I felt I needed neither flour nor butter. I asked that the flour may be removed from me and the issue of butter stopped. Col. Dalziel will not listen. What was issued was issued. I might feel tempted later. I pleaded that it was all waste of public money. I gently suggested that I was as solicitous about the use of public money as I would be about my own. There was an incredulous smile. I then said, "Surely it is my money." "How much have you contributed to the public treasury?" was the quick retort. I humbly replied, "You contribute only a percentage out of the salary you get from the state, whereas I give the whole of myself, labour, intelligence and all." There was a loud burst of suggestive laughter. But I did not collapse for I believed what I said. A labourer like me who labours for the state for mere maintenance contributes more to the state than a Viceroy who receives Rs. 20,000 together with royal residences and contributes to the state, if his salary be not

income tax free, a certain percentage of his salary. It becomes possible for him and those who belong to the system of which he is the chief to receive what he does out of the labour of millions. And yet many Englishmen and some Indians honestly believe that they serve the state (whatever the word may mean to them) more than the labourers and in addition contribute from their very salaries a percentage towards the upkeep of the state. There never was a grosser fallacy or a more absurd presumption than this modern belief in self-righteousness.

But I must return to the gallant Colonel. I have given the pleasantest sample of Col Dalziel's haughty distrust. Will the reader believe that I had to carefully preserve the flour till the advent of Major Jones who took Col Dalziel's place when the latter acted for the Inspector-General of Prisons?

Major Jones was the very reverse of Col Dalziel. From the very first day of his arrival, he became friends with the prisoners. I have a vivid recollection of our first meeting. Although he came with Col Dalziel with becoming ceremonial, there was a refreshing absence of officialdom about him. He greeted me familiarly and talked about my fellow prisoners in Sabarmati and conveyed their regards too, which he said they had sent. Though a strict disciplinarian, he never stood on his dignity. I have rarely met an official whether European or Indian so

free from humbug or false notions of prestige and dignity. He was ready to confess errors—a dangerous and rare practice with Government officials. He once awarded punishment not to a 'political' prisoner but to a helpless *bonafide* criminal. He subsequently came to learn that the punishment was not deserved. He straightway and without any pressure from outside cancelled it and made the following remarkable entry: 'I repent of my decision' in the prisoner's history ticket. The accurate manner in which the prisoners sum up superintendents is truly amazing. Major Jones was '*bahot bhala*'. They had nicknames for every one of the officials.

To finish however the story of my attempt to save the flour and other superfluous articles of diet. At Major Jones's very first visit of inspection I requested that what I did not need should be cut off. He immediately gave orders that my request should be complied with. Col Dalziel distrusted my motives, his successor took me at my word and he allowed me to make all the changes I wanted in the interest of economy, never once suspecting that I could be guilty of mental reservations.

Another official with whom we early came in contact was of course the Inspector General of Prisons. He was stiff, monosyllabic and gave one the impression that he was severe. His reserve was

peculiarly his own and most uncomfortable for poor prisoners. Most officials being deficient in imagination often do unintentional injustices. They refuse to see the other side. They will not have patience to listen to prisoners and expecting from them prompt, coherent replies and failing to get them, succeed in giving wrong decisions. Visits of inspection are often therefore a farce and almost invariably result in the wrong men bullies or sycophants being favoured. The right man, the silent humble prisoner will not be heard. Indeed most of the officials frankly admit their duty is confined to keeping the prisoners sanitarily clean, preventing prisoners from fighting one another or from absconding and keeping them healthy.

I must consider in the next chapter one of the sad results of this mentality

SOME TERRIBLE RESULTS

In this chapter I propose to discuss the results of the officials thinking that their duty ends with caring for the health of the prisoners, preventing fights among them or abscondings. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the jails may be described as well or ill managed cattle-farms. A superintendent who ensures good food for the prisoners and does not punish without cause, is

considered both by the Government and the prisoners as a model superintendent. Neither party expects more. If a superintendent were to introduce the real human touch in his relations with the prisoners, he is highly likely to be misunderstood by the prisoners and will very probably be distrusted by the Government as being unpractical, if not worse.

The jails have therefore become hot-beds of vice and degradation. The prisoners do not become better for their life in them. In most cases they become worse than before. Perhaps all the world over the jails are an institution the most neglected by the public. The result is that there is little or no public check on their administration. It is only when a political prisoner of some fame finds himself within the walls of a prison, that there is any public curiosity about the happenings therein.

What classification there is of prisoners is regulated more in the interests of the administration than those of the prisoners. Thus for instance, one would find habitual criminals and persons who have committed not a moral but a merely statutory offence are put together in the same yard, in the same block and even in the same cell. Fancy forty or fifty persons of varying types being locked in the same cell for night after night! An educated man who had been convicted under the Stamp Act for having used an officially defaced stamp, was put

in the same block as habitual offenders regarded as dangerous characters. It is no unusual thing to see murderers, abductors, thieves, and more statutory offenders huddled together. There are some tasks which can only be done jointly by several men, such as working the pump. Able-bodied men alone can be put on to such tasks. Some highly sensitive men were included in one such gang. Now the ordinary prisoners in such a gang will use language which no decent man would care to hear. The men who use indecent language have no sense of indecency in the language they use. But a sensitive man will feel most uncomfortable when such language is used in his presence. Convict-warders are in immediate charge of such gangs. In the discharge of their duty, it is customary for them to swear at prisoners in the choicest billingsgate. And when they are sufficiently worked up they do not spare the rod either. Needless to say both the punishments are not only unauthorised but they are unlawful. I could however present quite a decent catalogue of things unlawful, that happen in jails to the knowledge of, and sometimes even with the connivance of, officials. In the case mentioned by me the sensitive prisoner could not put up with the foul language. He therefore refused to work in the gang unless it was stopped. It was due to the prompt intervention of Major Jones that a most

awkward situation was averted. But the relief was momentary. He had no power to stop a recurrence of the trouble, for it must continue to recur so long as prisoners are not classified in accordance with a moral standard and with regard to their human requirements rather than administrative convenience.

One would have thought that in a jail where every prisoner is under surveillance night and day and can never be out of the sight of a warder, crimes will not be possible. But unfortunately every conceivable crime against morality is not only possible but is committed almost with impunity. I need not mention small pilferings, deceptions, petty and even serious assaults, but I wish to refer to unnatural crimes. I will not shock the reader with any details. In spite of my many jail experiences, I did not think that such crimes were possible in jails. But the Yerawada experience gave me more than one painful shock. The discovery of the existence of unnatural crimes produced one of the greatest of shocks. All the officials who spoke to me about them said that under the existing system it was impossible to prevent them. Let the reader understand that in a majority of cases the consent of the victim is lacking. It is my deliberate opinion that it is possible to prevent such crimes, if the administration of jails is humanised and can be made a matter of public concern. The number of prison-

ers in the jails of India must be several hundred thousand. It should be the concern of public workers to know what happens to them. After all, the motive behind punishment is reformation. The legislature, the judge and the jailor are believed to expect that the punishments would act as deterrents, not merely for the physical and mental hurt they cause, but for the repentance that prolonged isolation must bring about. But the fact is that punishments only brutalise the prisoners. In the jails they are never given an opportunity for repentance and reform. The human touch is lacking. True, there is a weekly visit from religious preachers. I was not permitted to attend any of these meetings, but I know that they are mostly shams. I do not wish to suggest that the preachers are shams. But a religious service once a week for a few minutes can produce no impression on those who ordinarily see nothing wrong in crimes. It is necessary to provide a responsive atmosphere in which a prisoner unconsciously sheds bad and cultivates good habits.

But such atmosphere is impossible so long as the system of entrusting convicts with most responsible work is continued. By far the worst part of the system is the appointment of convict-officers. These men are necessarily long-term prisoners. They are therefore men who have committed the most serious crimes. Generally the bullies are

chosen as warders. They are the most forward. They succeed in pushing themselves to the front. They are the instruments for the commission of almost all the crimes that take place in the jails. A free fight resulting in one death once took place because two such warders were concerned in the same prisoner who was a victim of their unnatural lust. Every one knew what was happening in the jail. But the authorities intervened only to prevent further fighting and further bloodshed. These convict-officers recommend tasks for the other prisoners. They supervise the tasks. They are responsible for the good behaviour of the prisoners under their charge. In fact the will of the permanent officers is expressed and carried out through these convicts who are dignified as officers. The marvel to me was that under such a system things were not much worse than they actually were. It once more demonstrated to me how superior men were to a wicked system as they were inferior to a good one. Human beings seem naturally to seek the middle path.

The whole of the cooking too is entrusted to prisoners. The result is indifferent cooking and organised favouritism. It is the prisoners who grind corn, shred vegetables, cook food, and serve. When complaints as to short and badly cooked rations were recurringly made, the invariable answer

was that the remedy was in their own hands as they cooked their own food, as if they were related to one another and understood mutual responsibility ! Once when I pushed the argument to its logical extent, I was told that no administration could afford the cost I differed from the view at the time of argument Further observation has confirmed me in my contention that under a well-devised system jail administration can be made self-supporting I hope to devote a chapter to an examination of jail economics For the present I must satisfy myself with saying that no question of cost can possibly be admitted as relevant in a consideration of moral abuses

'POLITICAL' PRISONERS

'We do not make any distinction between political and other prisoners Surely you do not want any such distinction to be made in your favour?' Thus said Sir George Lloyd when he visited the Yerawada Jail about the end of the last year He said that in reply to an inadvertent use made by me of the adjective 'political' I ought to have known better For I was fully aware of the Governor's distaste for that word And yet strange to say the history tickets of most of us were marked 'political' When I remarked upon the anomaly, I

was told by the then Superintendent that the distinction was private and was intended only for the guidance of the authorities. We the prisoners were to ignore it, for we could not base any claim upon it

I have reproduced Sir George Lloyd's language word for word so far as I can remember. There is a sting about what Sir George Lloyd said. And it was so gratuitous. For he knew that I was asking for no favours and no distinction. Circumstances has brought about a general discussion. But the idea was to tell me 'You are no better than the rest in the eye of the law and the administration'. And yet the painful inconsistency was that the very time that the distinction was, without any occasion for it, combated in theory, it was made in practice. Only in the majority of cases, it was made against the political prisoners.

As a matter of fact it is impossible to avoid making distinctions. If the human factor were not ignored, it would be necessary to understand a prisoner's habits of life, and model his life accordingly in the prisons. It is not a question of distinguishing between rich men and poor men or educated and uneducated, but between modes of life these antecedents have developed in them. As against the inevitable recognition of the existing fact, it has been urged that the men who commit crimes

should know that the law is no respecter of persons, and that it is the same to the law whether a rich man or a graduate or a labourer commits theft. This is a perversion of a sound law. If it is really the same to the law as it should be, each will get the treatment according to his capacity for suffering. To give thirty stripes to a delicately built thief and as many to an able-bodied one, would be not impartiality but vindictiveness towards the delicate one and probably indulgence to the able-bodied. Similarly to expect, say, Pundit Motilalji to sleep on a rough coir-mat spread on hard floor is additional punishment, not equality of treatment.

If the human factor was introduced into the administration of the jails, the ceremony on admission would be different from what it is to-day. Finger impressions would undoubtedly be taken, a record of past offences would find its place in the register. But there will be in addition particulars about the prisoner's habits and mode of life. Not distinction but classification is perhaps the word that better describes the necessary method which the authorities, if they would treat prisoners as human beings, must recognise. Some kind of classification there already is. For instance, there are circles wherein prisoners are housed in batches in long cells. Then there are the separate single cells intended for dangerous criminals. There are soli-

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

tary cells where prisoners undergoing solitary confinement are locked. There are again the condemned cells in which are locked prisoners awaiting the gallows. Lastly there are cells for under-trial prisoners. The reader will be surprised to find that political prisoners were mostly confined in the separate division or the solitary. In some cases they were confined in condemned cells. Let me not do an injustice to the authorities. Those who do not know these divisions and cells may form the impression that the condemned cells, for instance, must be specially bad. Such, however, is not the case. The cells are all well-constructed and airy so far as Yerawada jail is concerned. What is however open to strong objection is the association about these cells.

The classification being as I have shown inevitable and in existence, there is no reason why it should not be scientific and human. I know that revision of classification according to my suggestion means a revolution in the whole system. It undoubtedly means more expense and a different type of men to work the new system. But additional expense will mean economy in the long run. The greatest advantage of the proposed revolution would no doubt be a reduction in the crimes and reformation of the prisoners. The jails would then be reformatories representing to society sinners as its

reformed and respectable members This may be a far-off event If we were not under the spell of a long-lived custom we should not find it difficult task to turn our prisons into reformatories

Let me quote here a pregnant remark made by one of the jailors He once said, 'When I admit search or report prisoners, I often ask myself whether I am a better man than most of them. God knows, I have been guilty of worse crimes than what some have come here for The difference is that these poor men have been detected whereas I am not ' Is not what the good jailor confessed true of many of us? Is it not true that there are more undetected than detected crimes? Society does not point the figure of scorn at them But habit has made us look askance at those who are not smart enough to escape detection Imprisonment often makes them hardened criminals.

The animal treatment commences on arrest The accused are in theory assumed to be innocent unless they are found guilty In practice the demeanour of those in charge of them is one of haughtiness and contempt A convicted man is lost to society The atmosphere in the prison inures him to the position of inferiority

The political prisoners do not as a rule succumb to this debilitating atmosphere because they, instead of responding to the depressing atmosphere, act

against it and therefore even refine it to a certain extent. Society, too, refuses to regard them as criminals. On the contrary they become heroes and martyrs. Their sufferings in the jail are exaggerated by the public. And such indulgence in many cases even demoralises the political prisoners. But unfortunately, exactly in proportion to the indulgence of the public, is the strictness, mostly unwarranted, of the officials. The Government regard the political prisoners as more dangerous to society than the ordinary prisoner. An official seriously contended that a political prisoner's crime placed the whole society in danger whereas an ordinary crime harmed only the criminal.

Another official told me that the reason why the political prisoners were isolated and denied newspapers, magazines etc., was to bring the guilt home to them. Political prisoners, he said, seemed to glory in 'imprisonment'. The deprivation of the liberty, while it afflicted the ordinary criminal, left the political prisoner unmoved. It was therefore, he added, but natural that the Government should devise some other method of punishment, hence, he said, the denial of facilities which otherwise such prisoners should undoubtedly have. The remarks were made in connection with my request for the Times of India weekly, or the Indian Social Reformer, or the Servant of India or Modern

Review or Indian Review Let the reader not regard this deprivation as a light penalty for those who regard the newspaper as a necessity in no way inferior to breakfast I dare say that Mr. Majl would not have suffered mental derangement, if he had been allowed the use of newspapers It is equally depressing for one who is not like me a reformer for all occasions, to be put up together with dangerous criminals as almost all the political prisoners were put in Yerawada. It is no light thing to be in the company of those who never speak but to utter foul language or whose conversation is as a rule indecent I could understand political prisoners being put in such surroundings, if the Government sanely took them in their confidence and used them to exercise a wholesome influence on the ordinary criminal This however is, I admit, not a practical proposition My contention is that the placing of political prisoners in unwholesome surroundings is an additional and an unwarranted punishment They ought to be put in a separate division and given a treatment in keeping with their antecedents

I hope civil resisters will not misunderstand this or any other chapter in which I have advocated reforms of prisons It would ill become a civil resister to resent whatever inconvenience he may be subjected to He is out to put up with the

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

rougher treatment If the treatment is humane, it is well, but it is also well if it be otherwise

POSSIBILITIES OF REFORM

It has been my invariable experience that good evokes good, evil, evil, and that therefore, if the evil does not receive the corresponding response, it ceases to act, dies of want of nutrition Evil can only live upon itself Sages of old, knowing this law, instead of returning evil for evil, deliberately returned good for evil and killed it. Evil lives nevertheless, because many have not taken advantage of the discovery, though the law underlying it acts with scientific precision We are too lazy to work out in terms of the law the problems that face us, and therefore fancy that we are too weak to act up to it The fact is, that the moment the truth of the law is realised, nothing is so easy as to return good for evil It is the one quality that distinguishes man from the brute It is man's natural law not to retaliate Though we have the human form we are not truly human till we have fully realised the truth of the law and acted up to it The law admits of no escape

I cannot recall a single instance in which it has not answered Utter strangers have within my experience irresistibly responded to it. In all the

South African jails, through which I passed, the officials who were at first most unfriendly to me, became uniformly friendly because I did not retaliate. I answered their bitterness with sweetness. This does not mean that I did not fight injustice. On the contrary, my South African jail experiences were a continuous fight against it, and in most cases it was successful. The longer Indian experience has but emphasised the truth and the beauty of non-violent conduct. It was the easiest thing for me to acerbate the authorities at Yerawada. For instance, I could have answered the Superintendent in his own coin when he made the insulting remarks described in my letter to Hakim Saheb. I would have in that case lowered myself in my own estimation and confirmed the Superintendent in his suspicion that I was a cantankerous and mischievous politician. But the experiences related in that letter were trivialities compared to what was to follow. Let me recall a few of them.

A European warder I knew suspected me. He thought it was his business to suspect every prisoner. As I did not want to do any slightest thing without the knowledge of the Superintendent, I had told him that if a prisoner passing by salaamed, I could return the salaam and that I was giving to the convict warder in charge of me all the food that I could not eat. The European warder knew nothing of the

conversation with the Superintendent. He once saw a prisoner salaam me. I returned the salaam. He saw us both in the act, but only took from the prisoner his ticket. It meant that the poor man would be reported. I at once told the warder to report me too, as I was equally guilty, with the poor man. He simply told me he had to do his duty. Instead of reporting the warder for his officiousness, but in order to protect a fellow prisoner, I merely mentioned to the Superintendent the incident of salaaming without the conversation I had with the warder. The latter recognised that I meant no ill whatsoever to him, and from that time forward ceased to suspect me. On the contrary he became very friendly.

I was subject to search like the other prisoners. I never objected. And so, daily before the lock-up, a regular search took place for many months. Occasionally a jailor used to come who was exceptionally rude. I had nothing but my loin-cloth on. There was therefore no occasion for him to touch my person. But he did touch the groins. Then he began overhauling the blankets and other things. He touched my pot with his boots. All this was proving too much for me and my anger was about to get the better of me. Fortunately I regained self-possession and said nothing to the young jailor. The question, however still remained whether I should

or should not report him. This happened fairly long time after my admission to Yerawada. The Superintendent was therefore likely to take severe notice of the jailor's conduct if I reported him. I decided to the contrary. I felt that I must pocket these personal rudenesses. If I reported him the jailor was likely to lose his job. Instead therefore, of reporting him, I had a talk with him. I told him how I had felt his rudeness, how I had at first thought of reporting him and how in the end I decided merely to talk to him. He took my conversation in good part and felt grateful. He admitted too, that his conduct was wrong, though he said he did not act with the intention of wounding my susceptibilities. He certainly never molested me again. Whether he improved his general conduct in regard to other prisoners I do not know.

But what was most striking was perhaps the result of my intervention in connection with the floggings and the hunger-strikes. The first hunger-strike was that of the Sikh life-sentence prisoners. They would not eat food without the restoration of their sacred loin-cloth and without the permission to them to cook their own food. As soon as I came to know of these strikes, I asked to be allowed to meet them. But the permission could not be granted. It was a question of prestige and jail discipline. As a matter of fact there was no question of either, if the

prisoners could be regarded as human beings just as susceptible to finer forces as their species outside. My seeing them, I feel sure, would have saved the authorities a great deal of trouble, worry and public expense, and would also have saved the Sikh prisoners the painful prolonged fast. But I was told, if I could not see them, I could send them 'wireless messages'. I must explain this special expression. Wireless messages in prison parlance means unauthorised messages sent by one prisoner to another with or without the knowledge of the officials. Every official knows and must connive at such interchange of messages. Experience has shown them that it is impossible to guard against or to detect such breaches of prison regulations. I may say that I was scrupulously exact about such messages. I cannot recall a single occasion when I sent a 'wireless' for my own purpose. In every case it was in the interest of prison discipline. The result was, I think, that the officials had ceased to distrust me and if they had it in their power, they would have availed themselves of my offer of intervention in such cases. But the superior authority, so jealous of its prestige, would not hear of it.

In the above instance I did set in motion the wireless apparatus, but it was hardly effective. The fast was broken after many days, but I am unable to say whether it was at all due to my messages.

This was the first occasion when I felt that I should intervene in the interest of humanity

The next occasion was when certain Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged for short task. I need not go into the painful story at length. Some of these prisoners were youngsters. It is likely that they had wilfully done much less task than they could have. They were put on grinding. Somehow or other these prisoners were not classed political as the Swaraj prisoners were. Whatever the cause, they were mostly given grinding as their task. Grinding has an unnecessary bad odour about it. I am aware that all labour is irksome when it has to be done as a task and under supervision not always gentle. But a prisoner who courts imprisonment for conscience's sake, should look upon his task as a matter of pride and pleasure. He should put his whole soul into the labour that may be allotted to him. The Mulshi Peta prisoners, or for that matter the others, as a body were certainly not of this type. It was a new experience for them all and they did not know what was their duty as Satyagrahis whether to do the most or the least or not at all. The majority of the Mulshi Peta prisoners were perhaps indifferent. They had perhaps not given a thought to the thing. But they were mostly high-spirited men and youths. They would brook no 'jo hukum', and therefore there was constant friction between them and the officials.

The crisis came at last Major Jones became angry. He thought they were wilfully not doing their task. He wanted to make an example of them and ordered six of them to receive stripes. The flogging created a sensation in the prison. Everybody knew what was happening and why. I noticed the prisoners as they were passing by. I was deeply touched. One of them recognised me and bowed. In the separate, the 'political' prisoners intended to strike as a protest. I have paid my tribute to Major Jones. Here it is my painful duty to criticise his action. In spite of his sterling good nature, love of justice, and even partiality for prisoners as against officials, he was hasty in action. His decisions were sometimes therefore erroneous. It would not matter, as he is equally ready to repent, if it was not for sentences like flogging which once administered are beyond recall. I discussed the matter gently with him, but I know that I could not persuade him that he was wrong in punishing prisoners for short task. I could not persuade him to think that every short task was not proof of wilfulness. He did indeed admit, that there always was a margin for error, but his experience was that it was negligible. Unfortunately, like so many officers, he believed in the efficacy of flogging.

The political prisoners having taken a serious view of the case, were on the point of hunger-

striking I came to know of it I felt that it was wrong to hunger-strike without an overwhelming case being made out. The prisoners could not take the law in to their own hands and claim to judge every case for themselves. I asked Major Jones again for permission to see them. But that was not to be allowed. I have already published the correspondence on the subject which I invite the studious reader to consult at the time of reading these notes. I had, therefore, again to fall back upon the 'wireless'. The hunger-strike and a crisis were averted as a direct result of the wireless. But there was an unpleasant incident arising from the matter. Mr. Jeramdas had delivered my message contrary to the regulations. Mr. Jeramdas saw, as he had to see, the political prisoners concerned. They were purposely kept in separate blocks. He therefore 'wondered' from his own to the other blocks with the knowledge of the convict officers and one of the European jailors. He told them that he knew that he was breaking the regulations and that they were free to report him. He was reported in due course. Major Jones thought that he could not but take notice of the breach although he knew that it was for a good cause, and although he even appreciated Mr. Jeramdas's work. The punishment awarded was seven days' solitary confinement. On my coming to know of this, I invited Major Jones

to award at least the same penalty to me as to Mr. Jeramdas. For he (Mr Jeramdas) had broken the regulations at my instance. Major Jones said that in the interest of discipline he was bound to take notice of an open defiance brought officially to his notice. But he was not only not displeased with what Mr Jeramdas had done, but he was glad that even at the risk of being punished he saw the prisoners who were about to hunger-strike and thus saved an ugly situation. There was no occasion, he saw, to punish me as I had not left my boundary and as my instigation of Mr Jeramdas was not officially brought to his notice. I recognised the force of Major Jones's argument and attitude and did not further press for punishment.

I must consider in the next chapter another incident still more telling and important from the Satyagrahi standpoint and then consider the moral results of non-violent action and the ethics of fasting.

ETHICS OF FASTING

When the incidents related in last chapter took place, my cell was situated in a triangular block containing eleven cells. They were also part of the separate division but the block was separated from the other separate blocks by a high massive wall. The base of the triangle lay alongside the road.

leading to the other separate blocks. Hence I was able to watch and see the prisoners that passed to and fro. In fact there was constant traffic along the road. Communication with the prisoners was therefore easy. Sometime after the flogging incident, we were removed to the European yard. The cells were better ventilated and more roomy. There was a pleasant garden in front. But we were more secluded and cut off from all contact with the prisoners whom we used to see whilst we were in the 'separate'. I did not mind it. On the contrary, the greater seclusion gave me more time for contemplation and study. And the 'wireless' remained intact. It was impossible to prevent it so long as it was necessary for a single other prisoner or official to see us. In spite of effort to the contrary, some one of them would drop a remark resulting in our knowing the happenings in the jail. So one fine morning, we heard that several Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged for short task and that as a protest against the punishment many other Mulshi Peta prisoners had commenced a hunger-strike. Two of those were well known to me. One was Dev and the other Dastane. Mr Dev had worked with me in Champaran, and had proved one of the most conscientious, sober and honest among the co-workers, whom I had the privilege of having in Champaran. Mr Dastane of Bhusaval is known to

everybody The reader may therefore imagine the pain when I heard that Dev was among the party flogged and that he was also one of the hunger-strikers Messrs Indulal Yagnik and Mansar Ali Sokta were at this time my fellow prisoners They were agitated equally with me Their first thought was to declare a sympathetic hunger strike We discussed the propriety of such strike and came to the conclusion that it would be wrong to do so We were neither morally nor in any other way responsible for the floggings or the subsequent hunger strike As Satyagrahis we were to be prepared for and to suffer cheerfully the rigours of jail life and even injustices including flogging Such hunger-strike, therefore, with a view to prevent future punishment would be a species of violence done to the jail officials Moreover, we had no right to sit in judgment upon the action of the authorities That would be an end to all prison discipline And even if we wished to judge the authorities, we had not and could not get sufficient data to warrant an impartial judgment If the fast was to be out of sympathy with the hunger-strikers, we had no data to enable us to judge whether their action was justified or not Any one of these grounds was sufficient to show that the proposed fast would be wholly premature But I suggested to my friends that I should try to find out the true facts through

the Superintendent, and endeavour as before to get into touch with the hunger-strikers. I felt that we as human beings could not possibly remain uninterested in such matters although we were prisoners, and that under certain circumstances even a prisoner was entitled to claim a hearing in the matter of general jail administration when it was likely to result in the perpetration of gross injustice bordering on inhumanity. So we all decided that I should approach the authorities in the matter. The letter of 29th July 1923 published in *Young India* of March 6, 1924 will give the reader further details about the matter. There was a great deal of correspondence and negotiation, which being of a confidential nature, I do not wish to publish. I can however say that the Government recognised that I had no desire to interfere with the prison administration and that my proposal to be permitted to see the two leaders among the hunger-strikers was dictated by purely humanitarian motives. They therefore permitted me to see Messrs Dastane and Dev in the presence of the Superintendent and Mr Griffiths, the Inspector-General of Police. It was to me a rare pleasure and a matter of pride to see these two friends walking unaided and with a steady step after full thirteen days unbroken fast. They were as cheerful as they were brave. I could see that they were terribly reduced in body, but their

spirit had waxed strong in exact proportion to the reduction of the body. As I hugged them and greeted them with the question "Are you nearly dead?" they rang out "Certainly not" and Dastane added, "We are able to prolong the fast indefinitely, if need be, for we are in the right." "But if you are in the wrong" I asked. "We shall then like men admit our mistake and abandon the fast" was the reply. By their brightness they made me forget that they were suffering from pangs of hunger. I wish I had leisure to reproduce the whole of the ethical discourse we held. Their ground for fasting was that the punishment inflicted by the Superintendent was unjust and that therefore, unless the Superintendent admitted his mistake and apologised, they must go on with the fast. I pleaded that this was not a correct attitude. Whilst I was discussing the moral basis of their action the Superintendent voluntarily and out of his usual good nature intervened and said "I tell you if I felt that I had done wrong I should surely apologise. I know that I do make mistakes. We all do. I may have erred even in this case, but I am not conscious of it". I continued my pleading. I told my friends that it was improper to expect an apology from the Superintendent unless he could be convinced that he was wrong. Their fast could carry no conviction to him of the wrongness of the punishment. Such

conviction could be brought about only by reasoning. And in any case as Satyagrahis who were out for suffering how could they fast against injustices whether done to them or their co-prisoners. My friends appreciated the force of my argument and Major Jones's generous statement did the rest. They agreed to break the fast and to persuade the others to do likewise. I asked for the Major's permission to give them a portion of my milk which he readily granted. They accepted the milk but said they would first take their bath and then take the milk in the company of the other hunger-strikers. The Major ordered milk and fruit diet for the strikers during the period of recuperation. A hearty handshake between us all terminated the meeting. For the moment the officials were not officials and we were not prisoners. We were all friends engaged in solving a knotty problem and glad that it was solved. Thus ended this eventual hunger-strike. The Major admitted that this was the cleanest hunger-strike he had witnessed. He had taken extraordinary precautions to see that no food was passed to the prisoners surreptitiously and he was satisfied that none was passed. Had he known the stuff of which these strikers were made, he need not have taken any precaution at all.

One permanent result of the incident was that the Government passed orders that except in cases.

of the gravest provocation and insult offered to the officials, flogging should not be administered without the previous sanction of the superior authority. The precaution was undoubtedly necessary. Whilst in some matters widest discretion must be given to the Superintendents of Jails, in matters such as punishments which cannot be recalled, the wisest of Superintendents must be subject to salutary checks.

There can be no doubt that the hunger-strike of Messrs Dastane and Dev and the other Satyagrahis produced startling results of a beneficial character. For the motive though mistaken was excellent and the action itself purely innocent. But though the result attained was good, the fast must be condemned. The good result was not a direct result of the fast but of repentance and admission of mistaken motive and consequent abandonment of the fast. Fasting by a Satyagrahi can only be justified when it is a shame to eat and live. Thus still confining my attention to a prisoner's conduct it would be a shame to eat and live if I was deprived of religious liberty or degraded as a human being as when food is thrown at me instead of being given to me in a courteous manner. It should be unnecessary to say that religious objection should be really so and discourtesy should be such as would be felt by an ordinary prisoner. The caution is

necessary because a religious necessity is often pretended merely in order to embarrass, and discourtesy is often felt where none is meant. I may not insist on keeping or bringing the Bhagavad Gita for the purpose of stealing in prohibited correspondence. I must not resent as discourtesy the ordinary search which every prisoner must undergo. In Satyagraha there is no room for shams. But I would have been bound to fast, say, if the Government had not given me the opportunity of seeing the hunger-strikers merely with a view to understand their view-point and dissuade them from their error, if I found them to be erring. I could not afford to eat to live, when I knew that it was possible to prevent starvation if my keepers recognised the ordinary rules of humanity.

“But” say some friends, “why should you draw these fine distinctions? Why should we not embarrass the jail officials as we embarrass officials outside? Why should we co-operate as you co-operated with the jail authorities? Why should we not non-violently resist them? Why should we obey any regulations at all save for our own convenience? Have we not a perfect right, is it not our duty to paralyse the prison administration? If we make the officials’ position uncomfortable without using any violence, the Government will find it difficult to arrest a large number and will thus be

obliged to sue for peace " This argument has been seriously advanced I must therefore devote the next chapter to its consideration

SAI YAGRAHI PRISONER'S CONDUCT

The argument advanced by some friends and put by me at the end of the last chapter deserves consideration if only because so many honestly believe in it and so many followed it out consistently in their conduct in 1921 and 1922, when thousands went to jail

In the first instance even outside the jails embarrassment of the Government is not our goal We are indifferent if the Government is embarrassed so long as our conduct is right Our non-co-operation embarrasses the Government as nothing else can But we non-co-operate as lawyers or councillors because it is our duty That is to say we will not cease to non-co-operate if we discovered that our non-co-operation pleased the rulers And we are so indifferent because we believe that by non-co-operation we must ultimately benefit ourselves But there cannot be any such non-co-operation in the jails We do not enter them to serve a selfish end We are taken there by the Government as criminals according to their estimation Our business therefore is to disillusion them by acting in an

exemplary (and by them expected) manner, just as our business outside is to disillusion them by avoiding say their law courts, schools or councils or titles and by showing that we are prepared to do without their doubtful benefits

Whether all of us realise or not the method of non-co-operation is a process of touching the heart and appealing to reason, not one of frightening by rowdyism Rowdyism has no place in a non-violent movement

I have often likened Satyagrahi prisoners to prisoners of war Once caught by the enemy, prisoners of war act towards the enemy as friends It will be considered dishonourable on the part of a soldier as a prisoner of war to deceive the enemy It does not affect my argument that the Government does not regard Satyagrahi prisoners as prisoners of war If we act as such, we shall soon command respect We must make the prisons a neutral institution in which we may, nay must co-operate to a certain extent

We would be highly inconsistent and hardly self-respecting if on the one hand we deliberately break prison rules and in the same breath complain of punishment and strictness We may not for instance resist and complain of search and at the same time conceal prohibited things in our blankets or our cloths There is nothing in Satyagraha that

I know whereby we may under certain circumstances tell untruths or practise other deception

When we say that if we make the lives of prison officials uncomfortable, the Government will be obliged to sue for peace, we either pay them a subtle compliment or regard them as simpletons. We pay a subtle compliment when we consider that even though we make prison officials' lives uncomfortable, the Government will look on in silence and hesitate to award as condign punishment so as utterly to break our spirit. That is to say we regard the administrators to be so considerate and humane that they will not severely punish us even though we give them sufficient cause. As a matter of fact, they will not and do not hesitate to throw overboard all idea of decency and award not only authorised but even unauthorised punishments on given occasions.

But it is my deliberate conviction that had we but acted with uniform honesty and dignity, behaving Satyagrahis, we would have disarmed all opposition on the part of the Government and such strictly honourable behaviour on the part of so many prisoners would have at least shamed the Government into confessing their error in imprisoning so many honourable and innocent men. For is it not their case that our non-violence is but a

cloak for our violence? Do we not therefore play into their hands every time we are rowdy?

In my opinion therefore as Satyagrahis we are bound when we become prisoners

- (1) to act with the most scrupulous honesty ,
- (2) to co-operate with the prison officials in their administration ,
- (3) to set by our obedience to all reasonable discipline an example to co-prisoners ,
- (4) to ask for no favours and claim no privileges which the meanest of prisoners do not get and which we do not need strictly for reasons of health ,
- (5) not to fail to ask what we do so need and not to get irritated if we do not obtain it ,
- (6) to do all the tasks allotted, to the utmost of our ability

It is such conduct which will make the Government position uncomfortable and untenable. It is difficult for them to meet honesty with honesty for their want of faith and unpreparedness for such a rare eventuality. Rowdiness they expect and meet with a double dose of it. They were able to deal with anarchical crime but they have not yet found out any way of dealing with non-violence save by yielding to it.

The idea behind the imprisonment of Satyagrahis is that he expects relief through humble submission

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

to suffering. He believes that meek suffering for a just cause has a virtue all its own and infinitely greater than the virtue of the sword. This does not mean that we may not resist when the treatment touches our self-respect. Thus for instance we must resist to the point of death the use of abusive language by officials or if they were to throw our food at us which is often done. Insult and abuse are no part of an official's duty. Therefore we must resist them. But we may not resist search because it is part of prison regulations.

Nor are my remarks about mute suffering to be construed to mean that there should be no agitation against putting innocent prisoners like Satyagrahis in the same class as confirmed criminals. Only as prisoners we may not ask for favours. We must be content to live with the confirmed criminals and even welcome the opportunity of working moral reform in them. It is however expected of a government that calls itself civilised to recognise the most natural divisions.

JAIL ECONOMICS

Everyone who has any experience of jails knows that they are the most starved of all departments. The hospitals are comparatively the most expensive of public institutions. In the jails everything is of the

simplest and the crudest type In them there is extravagance in the spending of human labour There is miserliness in the spending of money and materials In hospitals it is just the reverse And yet both are institutions designed to deal with human diseases jails for mental and hospitals for physical Mental diseases are regarded as a crime and therefore punishable, physical diseases are regarded as unfore-seen visitations of nature to be indulgently treated As a matter of fact there is no reason for any such distinction Mental as well as physical diseases are traceable to the same causes If I steal I commit a breach of laws governing healthy society If I suffer from stomach-ache I still commit a breach of laws governing a healthy society One reason why physical diseases are treated lightly is because the so-called higher classes break the laws of physical health perhaps more frequently than the lower classes The higher classes have no occasion for committing crude thefts and as their lives would be disturbed if thefts continued, they being generally law-givers punish gross stealing, knowing all the while that their swindles which pass muster are far more harmful to society than the crude thefts It is curious too, that both institutions flourish because of wrong treatment Hospitals flourish because patients are indulged and humoured, jails flourish because the prisoners are

punished as if they were beyond recall. If every disease mental or physical were regarded as a lapse, but every patient or prisoner were to be treated kindly and sympathetically not severely or indulgently, both jails and hospitals would show a tendency to decrease. A hospital no more than a jail is a necessity for a healthy society. Every patient and every prisoner should come out of his hospital or jail as a missionary to preach the gospel of mental and physical health.

If, a more rational and more moral system of administration was adopted, the prisons would easily become self-supporting reformatones instead of as they are now, expensive penal settlements. I would save the terrible waste of labour in drawing water, grinding flour, etc. If I was in charge, I would buy flour from outside, I would draw water by machinery and instead of having all kinds of odd jobs I would devote the prisons to agriculture, hand-spinning and hand-weaving. In the small jails only spinning and weaving may be kept. Even now weaving there is in most of the central prisons. All that is necessary is to add carding and hand-spinning. All the cotton needed can be easily grown in connection with many jails. This will popularise the national cottage industry and make the prisons self-supporting. The labour of all the prisoners will be utilised for remunerative and yet not for com-

petitive purposes, as is now the case in some respects. There is a printing press attached to the Yerawada Jail. Now this press is largely worked by convict labour. I regard this as unfair competition with the general printing presses. If the prisons were to run competitive industries, they would easily be made even profitable. But my purpose is to show that they can be made self-supporting without entering into such competition and at the same time teach the inmates a home industry which on their discharge would give them an independent calling thus providing for them every incentive to live as respectable citizens.

I would moreover provide for the prisoners as homely an atmosphere as is consistent with public safety. I would thus give them all facility for seeing their relatives, getting books and even tuition. I would replace distrust by reasonable trust. I would credit them with every bit of work they might do and let them buy their own food cooked or raw.

I would make most of the sentences indeterminate, so that a prisoner will not be detained a moment longer than is necessary for the protection of society and for his own reform.

SOME CONVICT WARDERS

When Mr. Banker and I were transferred to the Yerawada Central Prison, there was one warder and

one bardasi. The latter is what the name implies, a mere servant. The convict warder whose acquaintance we first made was a Hindu from the Punjab side. His name was Harkaran. He was convicted of murder. The murder according to him was not premeditated but due to a fit of anger. By occupation he was a petty merchant. His sentence was fourteen years of which he had almost served nine years. He was fairly old. The prison life had told on him. He was always brooding and most anxious to be discharged. He was therefore morose and peevish. He was conscious of his high dignity. He was patronising to those who obeyed and served him. He bullied those who crossed his path. To look at him, no one would think he could be guilty of murder. He could read Urdu fluently. He was religiously minded and was fond of reading *bhajans* in Urdu. The Yerawada library has a few books for prisoners in several Indian languages, e g, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Canarese, Tamil. Harkaran was not above keeping and hiding trifles in defiance of jail regulations. He was in the majority. It would be regarded snobbish and foolish not to steal trifles. A prisoner who did not follow this unwritten law would have a bad time of it from his fellows. Ostracism would be the least punishment.

Well, the first acquaintance with Harkaran was not particularly happy. He knew that we were

'important' prisoners But so was he in a way After all he was an officer with a long and honourable record of service behind him. He was no respecter of persons Mr. Banker was torn away from me the very next morning Harkaran allowed the full force of his authority to descend upon me. I was not to do this or that I was not to cross the white line referred to in my letter to Hakimji But I had not the faintest idea of retaliating or resenting what he said or did I was too engrossed in my own work and studies even to think of Harkaran's simple and childish instructions It gave me momentary amusement Harkaran discovered his error When he saw that I did not resent his officiousness, nor did I pay any attention to it, he felt non-plussed. He was unprepared for such an emergency He therefore took the only course that was left open to him and that was to recognise my dissimilarity and respond to me when I refused to respond to him My non-violent non-co-operation led to his co-operation All non-violent non-co-operation, whether among individuals or societies, or whether between Governments and the governed, must lead ultimately to hearty co-operation Anyway Harakaran and I became perfect friends When Mr Banker was returned to me he put the finishing touch One of his many business in the jail was to boom me for all I was worth He thought that Harkaran and others

had not sufficiently realised my greatness. In two or three days time I found myself elevated to the position of a baby in woollens. I was too great to be allowed to sweep my own cell or to put out my own blankets for drying. Harkaran was all attention before, but now he became embarrassingly attentive. I could not do anything myself, not even wash a handkerchief. If Harkaran heard me washing it, he would enter the open bath-room and tear the kerchief away from me. Whether it was that the authorities suspected that Harkaran was doing anything unlawful for us or whether it was a mere accident, Harkaran was, to our sorrow, taken away from us. He felt the separation more perhaps than we did. He had a royal time with us. He had plenty of estates and that openly from our rations, supplemented as they were with fruit that friends sent from outside. And as our fame was 'noised abroad,' Harkaran's association with us had given him an added status with the other prisoners.

When I was given the permission to sleep on the cell verandah the authorities thought that it was too risky to leave me with one warder only. Probably the regulations required that a prisoner whose cell was kept open should have two warders to watch over him. It might even be that the addition was made for my protection. Whatever the cause, another warder was posted for night duty. His

name was Shabaskhan I never inquired about the cause but I thought that a Mahomedan was chosen to balance the Hindu Harkaran Shabaskhan was a powerful Baloochi He was Harkaran's contemporary Both knew each other well Shabaskhan too was convicted of murder It resulted from an affray in the clan to which he belonged Shabaskhan was as broad as he was tall His build always reminded me of Shaukat Ali Shabaskhan put me at ease the very first day He said, 'I am not going to watch you at all Treat me as your friend and do exactly as you like. You will never find me interfering with you If you want anything done I shall be only too happy, if I can do it for you' Shabaskhan was as good as his word He was always polite He often tempted me with prison delicacies and always felt genuinely sorry that I would not partake of them 'You know', he would say, 'if we do not help ourselves to these few things, life would be intolerable, eating the same things day in and day out With your people, it is different You come for religion That fact sustains you, whereas we know that we have committed crimes We would like to get away as soon as ever we can' Shabaskhan was the gaoler's favourite Growing enthusiastic over him he once said, 'Look at him I consider him to be a perfect gentleman In a fit of temper he has committed murder for which he

truelly repents I assure you there are not many men outside who are better than Shabaskhan It is a mistake to suppose that all prisoners are criminals. Shabaskhan I have found to be most trustworthy and courteous If I had the power I would discharge him to-day ' The gaoler was not wrong Shabaskhan was a good man, and he was by no means the only good prisoner in that gaol Let me note in passing that it was not the gaol that had made him good He was good outside

It is customary in the jails never to keep a convict officer on the same duty for any length of time. Transfers constantly take place It is a necessary precaution Prisoners cannot be allowed, under the existing system, to develop intimate relations We had therefore a most varied experience of convict officers After about two months, Shabaskhan was replaced by Adan But I must introduce this warder to the reader in the next chapter

(2)

Adan was a young Somali soldier who was sentenced to ten year's hard labour for desertion from the British Army which he had joined during the war He was transferred by the Adan Jail authorities Adan had served four years when we were admitted He was practically illiterate He

could read the Koran with difficulty but could not copy it correctly, if at all. He was able to speak Urdu fairly fluently and was anxious to learn Urdu. With the permission of the Superintendent I tried to teach him but the learning of the alphabet proved too great a strain upon him and he left it. With all that he was quickwitted and sharp as needle. He took the greatest interest in religious matters. He was a devout Mussalman, offered his prayers regularly including the midnight one, and never missed the Ramzan fast. The rosary was his constant companion. When he was free, he used to recite selections from the Koran. He would often engage me in a discussion on complete fasts according to the Hindu custom as also on Ahimsa. He was a brave man. He was very courteous but never cringing. He was of an excitable nature and therefore often quarrelled with the bardasi or his fellow warder. We had therefore sometimes to arbitrate between them. Being a soldier and amenable to reason, he would accept the award, but he would put his case boldly and cogently. Adan was the longest with us. I treasure Adan's affection. He was most attentive to me. He would see to it that I got my food at the appointed time. He was sad if I ever became ill and anticipated all my wants. He would not let me exert myself for anything. He was anxious to be discharged or at least to be transferred

to Aden. I tried hard, I drew up petitions for him. The Superintendent too tried his best. But the decision rested with the Aden authorities. Hope was held out to him that he would be discharged before the end of last year. I do hope he is already discharged. The little service I rendered gave rise to deep personal attachment. It was a sad parting when Adan was transferred to another part of the prison. I must not omit to mention that when I was organising spinning and carding in the jail, Adan, though one of his hands was disabled, helped most industriously at making slivers. He became very proficient in the art which he had come to like.

As Shabaskhan was replaced by Adan, Har-karan was replaced by Bhiwa. Much to our agreeable surprise, Bhiwa was a Mahar from Maharashtra and therefore an untouchable. Of all the warders we met he was perhaps the most industrious. The reader will be surprised to find that the canker of untouchability has not left even the jails untouched. Poor Bhiwa! He would not enter our cells without considerable hesitation. He would not touch our pots. We quickly set him at rest by telling him that we had not only no prejudices against untouchables but that we were trying our best to do away with the curse. Shankarlal Banker specially befriended him and made him feel perfectly at home with us. He permitted Bhiwa to be so familiar with

him that the former would resent an angry word from Mr Banker and the latter would even apologise. He induced Bhiwa to apply himself to studies and taught him also spinning. The result was that Bhiwa became in an incredibly short space of time an accomplished spinner and began so to like it that he thought of learning weaving, and earning his living through that occupation when he went out. I cultivated in the jail the habit of drinking hot water and lemon at 4-15 A.M. When I protested against Mr Banker doing it for me, he initiated Bhiwa into the mystery. Prisoners, though they get up early enough, do not like to leave their matting (which is their bed) at that early hour. Bhiwa however immediately responded to his friend's suggestion. But it was Mr Banker's business always to wake up Bhiwa at 4 o'clock. When Bhiwa went (he was discharged under special remission), Adan undertook the duty. He will not listen to my doing it myself. And the tradition was kept up even after Mr Banker's discharge, each out-going warder initiating the incoming one into all the mysteries. Needless to say this morning duty was no part of the prison task. Indeed convicts when they became warders were not expected to do any labour at all. Theirs is but to order.

Even as the best of friends must part some day, Bhiwa bade good-bye. He was permitted to receive

from Mr Banker khaddar caps, khaddar dhoties, khaddar vests and a khaddar blanket. He promised to wear nothing but khaddar outside. Let me hope good Bhiwa, wherever he may be, is keeping the promise.

Bhiwa was followed by Thamu. He too belonged to Maharashtra. Thamu was a mild-mannered warder. He had not much 'go' in him. He would do what he was asked but did not believe in specially exerting himself. He and Adan therefore did not get on quite well together. But Thamu being timid always yielded to Adan in the end. He had such a royal time (all had) with us that Thamu did not want to be separated from us. He therefore preferred to bear Adan's hard yoke to being transferred. Thamu having come to us a considerable time after Adan, the latter was Thamu's senior with us. It is remarkable how these fictitious seniorities spring up in little places like jails. Yerawada was to us a whole world or better still the whole world. Every squabble, every little jar, was a mighty event commanding sustained interest for the day and sometimes even for days. If the jail authorities permitted a jail newspaper to be conducted by the prisoners and for them, it would have a cent circulation and such toothsome news as properly cooked dholi, well-dressed vegetables, and sensational items as war of words between prisoners, sometimes even resulting

in blows and consequent khatla (trial) before the Superintendent, would be 'as eagerly devoured by the prisoners as the news of big dinner parties and great wars are devoured by the public outside I make the present of a suggestion to enterprising members of the Assembly that if they desire fame they cannot do better than introduce a bill requiring Superintendents of jails to permit the publishing and editing of newspapers by prisoners exclusively for their own use and under strict censorship by the authorities

To return to Thamu, though he was flabby, as a man he was otherwise as good as any of his predecessors He took to the charka like fish to water In a week's time, he pulled a more even thread than I did And after a month, the pupil out-distanced the teacher by a long way So much so that I grew jealous of Thamu's superiority I saw too from Thamu's rapid progress that my slow progress was a peculiar defect of mine and that an ordinary person could pull a perfect thread in a month at the outside Every one of those who were taught by me excelled me in no time. To Thamu as to Bhiwa, the spinning wheel had become a welcome companion They were able to drown the sorrows of separation from their nearest in the soft and gentle music of the wheel Later on spinning became

Thamu's first work in the morning He spun at the rate of four hours per day.

When we were shifted to the European yard, there were several changes. Among them was a change of warders Adan was the first to be transferred Though neither he nor we liked it, we took his transfer bravely Then came Thamu's turn Poor fellow, he broke down. He wanted me to try to keep him 'I would not do that. I thought it was beyond my province The authorities had a perfect right to shift whom and where they would Adan and Thamu were followed by Kunti a Gurkha, and a Canarese by name Gangappa The Gurkha was called Goorkha by every body. He was reserved but grew 'chummy' later on For the first few days, he did not know where he was Probably he thought we would report and involve him on the slightest pretext But when he saw that we meant no mischief, he came closer to us But he was soon transferred Gangappa, I have partly described in the introduction to the jail correspondence. He was an elderly man His almost punctilious observance of rules and his great devotion to duty commanded my admiration He put his whole soul into whatever he was ordered by the authorities to do He took up duties which he need not have He rarely remained idle He learnt to make and cook chapatis for my companions His devotion to me personally I shall

never forget No wife or sister could be more unsparing than Gangappa in his attention He was awake at all times He took delight in anticipating my wants He saw to it that all my things were kept spotlessly clean. During my illness, he was my most efficient nurse, because he was the most attentive When we were transferred to the European yard, Messrs Mansar Ali and Yagnik used to join me at prayer time Mr Mansar Ali was transferred to Allahabad for his discharge in due course Mr Yagnik because he needed more intensive and philosophical rather than devotional meditation dropped out Gangappa felt that without these friends I would feel lonely at prayer The very first time that he saw that I was alone at prayer, he quietly took his seat in front of me Needless to say I appreciated the delicate courtesy underlying the action It was so spontaneous, unofficious, and natural for Gangappa. I do not call it religious in the accepted sense of the term, though, according to my conception, it was truly religious I always hesitated to invite any body to these prayer meetings of mine I did not want them to come for my sake I did not feel lonely I realised most at that time the companionship of God If any one came, I wanted him not for keeping company but for sharing the divine companionship I therefore particularly hesitated to invite the warders I felt

that they might join merely out of form, whereas I wanted them to join only if they naturally felt like joining. With Gangappa it was a mixture of pity for me in my loneliness and desire to share with me the sacred half-hour, though he could understand not a word of what I sang save of course Ramnam. Gangappa drew to the prayer meeting another warder Annappa, also a Canarese, and later Mr. Abdul Gani felt impelled to join. I imagine that Mr. Abdul Gani was unconsciously influenced by Gangappa's unobtrusive act of joining me.

The reader will see that I had a uniformly happy experience of these convict warders. I could not have wished for more devoted companions or more faithful attendants. Paid service would but be a patch upon this and that of friends could only equal it. And yet the pity of it is that society treats such men as criminals and outcasts because they had the misfortune to be convicted. I entirely endorse the remark of the head jailor already quoted by me in a previous chapter that there are in our jails many men who are better than those outside. The reader will now understand why I felt a pang when I heard that I was discharged, and most of the companions who had covered me with so much kindness and whom there was in my opinion no occasion to detain any longer in the jails were left behind.

One word more and I must regretfully part with

Gangappa Gangappa always knew his limitations. He would not spin He said he could not do it His fingers had not the cunning for it But he kept the work room in order, cleaned my wheel and devoted all his spare time to sunning and cleaning the cotton for carding

Of all the many happy memories of my prison life I know that those of the company of the convict warders will perhaps linger the longest

MAHATMA GANDHI'S FAST

CAUSES OF THE FAST

The recent events culminating in constant fighting between Musalmans and Hindus all over the country have proved unbearable for me. My hopelessness is still more unbearable. My religion teaches me that whenever one is very distressed by something which one cannot remove one must fast and pray. I have done so in connection with my own dearest one. Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of twentyone days commencing from today and ending on Wednesday the 8th of October. I reserve the liberty to drink water with or without salt.

It is both a penance and prayer. As penance I need not have taken the public into confidence, but I publish the fast as (let me hope) an effective prayer both to Hindus and to Mussalmans who have hitherto worked in unison not to commit suicide. I respectfully invite the hands of all the communities including Englishmen to meet and end this quarrel which is a disgrace to religion and humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts.

ALL ABOUT THE FAST

I wish to assure the reader that the fast has not been undertaken without deliberation. As a matter of fact my life has been at stake ever since the birth of Non-co-operation. I did not blindly embark upon it. I had ample warning of the dangers attendant upon it. No act of mine is done without prayer. Man is a fallible being. He can never be sure of his steps. What he may regard as an answer to his prayer may be an echo of his pride for infallible guidance. Man must, to have a perfectly innocent heart, be incapable of evil. I can lay no such claim. Mine is a struggling, striving, erring, imperfect soul. But I can rise only by experimenting upon myself and others. I believe in absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity. What though we have many bodies we have but one soul. I cannot therefore detach myself from a wickedest soul (nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous). Whether therefore I will or no I must involve in my experiment whole of my kind nor can I do without experiment. Life is but an endless series of experiments.

A SACRED DUTY

I knew that non-co-operation was a dangerous experiment. Non-co-operation in itself is unnatural,

vicious and sinful but non-violent non-co-operation, I am convinced, is a sacred duty. At times I have proved it in many cases but there was every possibility of mistake in its application to large masses. But desperate diseases call for desperate remedies. Non-violent non-co-operation was the only alternative to anarchy and worse. The fact that the Hindus and Mussalmans who were only two years ago apparently working together as friends are now fighting like cats and dogs in some places shows conclusively that non-co-operation they offered was not non-violent. I saw symptoms in Bombay, Chauri Chaura and in a host of minor cases. I did penance then. It has its effect "pro tanto" but this Hindu Muslim tension was unthinkable. It became unbearable.

EFFECTIVE REMEDY

On hearing of the Kohat tragedy on the eve of my departure from Sabarmati for Delhi, Sarojini Devi wrote to me that speeches and homilies on peace would not do. I must find out an effective remedy. She was right in saddling the responsibility on me. Had I not been instrumental in bringing into being the vast energy of people? I must find a remedy if the energy proved self destructive. I wrote to say that I should find it only by plodding. Empty prayer

is as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal I little knew then that the remedy was to be this prolonged fast. And yet I know that the fast is not prolonged enough for quenching the agony of my soul Have I erred? Have I been impatient? Have I compromised with the evil? I may have done all those things or none of them All I know is what I see before me If real non-violence and truth had been practised by the people who are now fighting the gory duelling that is now going on would have been impossible

BLEEDING HEART'S PRAYER

My responsibility is clearly somewhere I was violently shaken by Amethi Shambhal and Gulbarga I had read reports about Amethi and Sambhal prepared by the Hindu and Mussalman friends. I had learnt joint-finding of Hindu and Mussalman friends who went to Gulbarga I was writing in deep pain and yet I had no remedy ' News of Kohat set the smouldering mass aflame Something had got to be done I passed two nights in restlessness and pain On Wednesday I knew the remedy I must do penance in Satyagrahashram At the time of morning prayer we ask Shiva the God of mercy to forgive our sins knowingly or unknowingly committed My penance is the prayer of a bleeding heart for forgiveness for sins unwittingly committed It is a warning

to the Hindus and Mussalmans who have professed to love me. If they have loved me truly and if I have been deserving of their love, they will do no penance with me for the grave sin of denying God in their hearts.

TRUE PENANCE

To revile one another's religion, to make reckless statements to utter untruth, to break the heads of innocent men, to desecrate temples or mosques is the denial of God. The world is watching, some with glee and some with sorrow, the dog-fight that is proceeding in our midst. We have listened to Satan. Religion, call it by what name you like, is made of sterner stuff. The penance of the Hindus and Mussalmans is not fasting but retracing their steps. It is true penance for the Mussalman to harbour no ill for his Hindu brother and equally true penance for a Hindu to harbour none for his Mussalman brother. I ask of no Hindu or Mussalman to surrender an iota of his religious principle. Only let him be sure that it is religion. But I do ask of every Hindu and Mussalman not to fight for earthly gain. I should be deeply hurt if my fast made either community surrender on a matter of principle.

A MATTER BETWEEN GOD AND MYSELF

My fast is a matter between God and myself. I did not consult friends not even Hakim Sahib who was closeted with me for a long time on Wednesday, not Maulana Mahomed Ali under whose roof I am enjoying the privilege of hospitality. When man wants to make up with his Maker, he does not consult a third party. He ought not to. If he has any doubt about it he certainly must. But I had no doubt in my mind about the necessity of my stop. Friends would deem it their duty to prevent me from undertaking the fast. Such things are not matters for consultation or argument. They are matters of feeling. When Rama decided to fulfil his obligation, he did not swerve from his resolve either by the weepings and the wailings of his dear mother or the advice of his preceptors or the entreaty of his people or even the certainty of his father's death if he carried out his resolve. These things are momentary. Hinduism would not have been much of a religion if Rama had not steeled his heart against the very temptation. He knew that he had to pass through every travail if he was to serve humanity and become a model for future generations.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE

MAHAMMAD ALI'S CARE

But was it right for me to go through fast under a Mussalman roof? Yes, it was. Fast is not born out of ill-will against a single soul. My being under a Mussalman roof ensures it against any such interpretation. It is in the fitness of things that this fast should be taken up and completed in a Mussalman house and who is Mahomed Ali. Only two days before the fast, we had a discussion about a private matter in which I told him what was mine was his and what was his was mine. Let me gratefully tell the public that I have never received a warmer or better treatment than under Mahomed Ali's roof. Every want of mine is anticipated. The dominant thought of every one of his household is to make me and mine happy and comfortable.

RICHEST LOVE

Doctors Ansari and Abdur Rahman have constituted themselves my medical advisers. They examine me daily. I have had many happy occasions in my life. This is no less happy than the previous ones. Bread is not everything. I am experiencing here the richest love. It is more than bread for me.

MUSSALMAN MIND

It has been whispered that by being so much with Mussalman friends I make myself unfit to know the Hindu mind. The Hindu mind is myself. Surely I do not need to live amidst the Hindus to know the Hindu mind when every fibre of my being is Hindu. My Hinduism must be a very poor thing if it cannot flourish under the influences most adverse. I know instinctly what is necessary for Hinduism, but I must labour to discover the Mussalman mind. The closer I come to the best of Mussalmans the juster I am likely to be in my estimate of the Mussalmans and their doings. I am striving to become the best cement between the two communities. My LONGING IS TO BE ABLE TO CEMENT THE TWO WITH MY BLOOD IF NECESSARY. But before I can do so I must prove to the Mussalmans that I love them as well as I love the Hindus. My religion teaches me to love all equally. May God help me to do so. My fast is among other things meant to qualify me for achieving that equal and selfless love.

FINIS

